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ABSTRACT

The Ypsilanti Curriculum Demonstration Project's language training curriculum for three- and four-year old disadvantaged children, using the Bereiter Engelmann program, is provided. The purpose of the curriculum is to effect a behavior change in the child to enable him to achieve in the traditional education environment. Emphasis is given to the development of "educational language" as opposed to "social language." Monthly reports of teachers for the months of October 1969 through February 1970 comprise most of this description of the program activities. A summary for the year is provided. Each monthly report is structured as follows: Opening and Closing Periods; Semi-Structured Time; Subject Areas: (1) Language, (2) Arithmetic, and (3) Reading; Child Management; and Notes. In addition to the monthly reports, brief discussions are given concerning home visits, teacher training, examples of positive reinforcement, issues concerning children and teachers in the language training program, and a contribution by a teacher's aide. (Appendixes A and B, Sample Lessons and Reading Supplement, respectively, are copyrighted and not available for reproduction.) (DB)

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Ypsilanti Preschool Curriculum Demonstration Project

THE LANGUAGE-TRAINING CURRICULUM

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INTRODUCTION BY THE TEACHERS

The Bereiter-Engelmann program was originally set up at the University of Illinois for use with five- and six-year-old disadvantaged children. It has been used in the Ypsilanti Curriculum Demonstration Project with three- and four-year-old disadvantaged youngsters.

The purpose of the language training curriculum is to change the child's behavior so that he is better able to achieve success in the traditional education environment. Emphasis is placed on the development of "educational language" as opposed to "social language."

The academic subjects--language, reading, and arithmetic --receive the main emphasis in the program. Opportunity is also given for the child to develop the skills he will need in kindergarten.

Consideration is given to the social and emotional growth of the child. This is especially true with respect to the individual child as part of a group.

Our hope for these children is that they will enter kindergarten with a positive attitude toward school; with feelings of self-worth and self-confidence; and with the skills, attitudes, and habits that together will help them achieve success in school.

HOME VISITS

This school year only four-year-olds and children returning from last year are receiving home visits. Our immediate goal on these visits is to get the mother involved in her child's work and progress in school, that is, in language, reading, and arithmetic.

One or two days before each home visit, we send a note home with the child. The mothers seem to appreciate this and usually clean the house and prepare a place for us to work. On our initial visits the primary goal is to establish a rapport between teacher and mother. In many cases the mother feels very apprehensive at first because she does not really know why we are coming or what we are going to do. After she realizes that we are not going to lecture her about what she should do and how she should change, her anxiety diminishes.

After some kind of rapport has been established with the mother, home visits become work-oriented and usually last ninety minutes, although this varies from child to child--some children get sleepy or refuse to work. We start out doing language, reading, and arithmetic. We have found that reading is the hardest for the mother to do with her child, because in our program reading is all sounds rather than letter identification. For example, we have shown the letter [m]. The mother says, "That's the letter [m]," identifying it by its name, but the child says, "No, it's [mmmm]", identifying it by its sound. Because of this difficulty, we usually do the reading lesson with the child ourselves while the mother watches. Language and arithmetic are easier for the mother to do, so we try to get her actively involved in these areas. We leave colored strips of paper and flash cards, which help the child and which the mother can use easily because she knows the right answers. We also make and leave work sheets on the sounds the child is working on, and we do the same for language lessons.

When the child seems to get tired of doing language, reading, and arithmetic, we go on to game activities--puzzles, lotto, counting discs, beads, dominoes. We usually try to bring some new toys and games the child has not encountered during the regular school day.

OUTLINE OF DAY

9:30 - 9:45	Take off coats Play Period
9:45 - 9:55	Singing
9:55 - 10:00	Bathroom
10:00 - 10:20	Reading - Group 3 Language - Group 1 Review with Aide - Group 2
10:20 - 10:40	Reading - Group 2 Language - Group 1 Review with Aide - Group 1
10:40 - 10:55	Semi-structured Activities
10:55 - 11:05	Juice (Quiet Time)
11:05 - 11:20	Reading - Group 1 Language - Group 2 Review with Aide - Group 3
11:20 - 11:35	Arithmetic - Groups 1, 2, 3
11:35 - 11:45	Story Dismissal by name

LANGUAGE TRAINING CURRICULUM FOR THREE- AND FOUR-YEAR-OLDS
1969-1970

Teachers: Mrs. Linda Hiatt and Mrs. Sheila Mainwaring

October Report
(first two weeks)

GROUPS

The children in the Language Training Program are divided into three groups according to ability. Group 1 consists of the most rapid learners from the program last year (four-year-olds). Group 2 is made up of the slower students from last year and the new students (three-year-olds) who seem best suited to a more rapid pace; this is judged by verbal ability (i.e., the ability to understand and use the whole-sentence speech patterns) and attention span. The remaining three-year-olds are in Group 3, which works at the slowest pace.

Each group has reading, arithmetic, and language every day. A child may be able to do top work in reading and language but may function better in a slower group for arithmetic. During the first week of school this year, four children had their groups changed. Such changes will probably continue to be necessary, since this program places a high value on the children's ability to concentrate for a given period of time on a given task without distracting others; this does not necessarily correlate with their ability to do the task or to understand the lesson, but it is a common expectation of teachers and is thus an important part of a child's performance in school.

OPENING AND CLOSING PERIODS (Mrs. H.)

When the children arrive at school, they hang up their coats on hooks. Each hook has a name symbol. We encourage the children to take their own coats off and hang them up themselves, instead of the teachers or aides doing it for them.

For the first 15 minutes of each day we encourage the children to play with "educational" toys, such as puzzles, books, blocks, matching games, tinker toys, counting boards, skill frames. We realized at once that we had to limit the selection of toys and puzzles. There was too much equipment on the shelf, and it was too confusing for the children to choose just one object at a time. This was corrected on the second day of school. The children were also reminded to put back their toys before they got something else out. At the end of this opening playtime, one of the teachers plays the piano, and the children are learning that this is their cue to put all of the toys away, quickly find a chair, and sit at a table quietly. We have made this into a little game: the children must be seated at the table before the teacher stops playing the piano.

Next, we sing for about ten minutes. During the first week of school we sang the same two songs each day, in order to help the new three-year-olds learn the lyrics and learn the concept "singing." We dismiss from singing by tables--the round table may go first one day, the rectangular table another day. (This is also an exercise in shape recognition, which is a part of the language curriculum.)

After the children have used the restrooms, we ask them to find their groups. The children from last year knew their groups, but the new children began by wandering around the room and following the older children into groups, usually the wrong ones. In response to this confusion, we now call the children into groups by name. From past experience, we are sure the children will soon be conditioned to join their group without assistance.

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For the last ten minutes of the day, a teacher reads a story to the entire group. The children are asked to sit "like Indians," with their legs crossed. We choose stories that pertain to the language lesson for the day. Actually, you can pick up almost any children's book and find examples of the concepts you wish to emphasize. We read the stories and ask yes-no questions about the pictures. We also use the language patterns to talk about the pictures. After reading the story, we ask review questions. This is also a time for free communication between child and teacher about the story or a similar experience a child has had.

We dismiss the children one at a time by showing each child his symbol. We also sing "Do you want to go?" If a particular child is working hard and singing, he will be dismissed first. The children who

are last to leave are usually those who have been bothering others and not paying attention. The high-school aide helps them with their coats and lines them up to go out to the bus. It is very hard to get them to line up because they are very anxious to get on the bus and go home.

SEMI-STRUCTURED TIME (Mrs. M.)

This is a period of 15 to 20 minutes in the middle of the day when we attempt to train the children in skills they will use in kindergarten, since our students go from preschool to kindergarten. These skills include coloring, cutting, pasting, sharing of materials, and group games. During this time all children are seated at tables and must remain there unless the activity requires space and area to move around in.

The first activity was learning to hold a crayon properly. Each child was given an outline drawing of his name symbol to fill in. Four children did not hold the crayon correctly, like a pencil. By the end of the period all were doing it properly. This was better than the performance last year, when perhaps half were unable to hold a crayon correctly at the beginning of the year.

The second activity was cutting with scissors. Mrs. H. demonstrated their use--"open, shut"--and the proper fingers to use. A Frostig sheet was also used, showing a boy running to a tree, with two horizontal lines above and below the boy and tree. The children were to cut on the two lines, which we had colored red. The skill level of the group varied from having to open and close the scissors with both hands to complete ease and skill in manipulating the scissors. The work sheet we chose was too difficult for the three-year-olds. They could not concentrate both on the scissors and on the lines. So then we simply gave the three-year-olds a piece of colored construction paper and told them to cut it into little pieces. Indeed they did! They also helped pick up all the pieces and put them into the waste basket.

This second attempt with scissors worked well with all but three children. One child still could not open and close the scissors with one hand. The other two had their hand turned over so their thumb was not on top. All three received individual attention.

SUBJECT AREAS

The beginning of the month, and of the school year, was spent reviewing material that had been covered last year. This was the first task for the new teacher in the program, Mrs. M., and her report on language and arithmetic follows.

I. LANGUAGE (Mrs. M.)

Group 1. Identity statements were reviewed by using various objects placed in a can, e.g., a car, a cup, a plate. I took an object out and gave the identity statement: "This is a ...." The children were asked to repeat this statement in unison. Then I asked questions about the object. For a car I might ask, "Is this a ball?" and they would respond, "No, this is not a ball." The children enjoyed holding the objects and saying the identity statements. (In this way I was also able to check individual understanding of the material.)

During a single period, I would present three or four different concepts, each exercise lasting about 2 to 3 minutes.

Plural statements were reviewed, using two or more objects that were exactly the same. I would say, "This is a cup. This is a cup. These are cups." The children would repeat the plural statement.

We covered three polars in review: big, fat, and long. Drawings were made on the board of pairs of objects showing these qualities. I would point to the larger object and ask, "Is this ball big?" The response required by the curriculum is, "No, this ball is not big." Many children want to say, "No, it's little," but the program requires that "not" statements be emphasized before opposites. The group enjoys playing a game where they erase the drawing from the board when I say, "Erase the big ball," or "Erase the ball that is not big."

Parts of the body were reviewed by using a picture of a child. The children identified the body parts from the picture. They knew the most common ones (head, arm, leg, etc.). We also went over less common parts--eyebrow, eyelashes, nostrils--which they were not as sure of. I made a clown head with an open mouth out of cardboard. Behind the mouth was a circle with pictures of the body parts; as you move the circle, one body part at a time appears at the clown's mouth. The children turned the circle and said the name of the part. They were anxious for their turn and enjoyed this activity.

Two categories, toys and vehicles, were discussed. Objects for each category are kept in boxes, and these were presented and the rule for each given: A vehicle is something that takes you places. A toy is something you play with. I present only one category a day, holding up the objects and giving the rule. This group remembered both rules and the proper identity statements.

The object characteristic of shape was also reviewed. The children identified the shapes square, circle, rectangle, diamond, oval, and triangle from pictures. One day we used the cardboard clown with a disc showing these shapes. Each child was able to identify all the shapes.

Being a new teacher in the preschool program, I found it difficult to make each activity short enough to get three or four areas into a period.

To reinforce the learning in language, worksheets are given to our aide, who works with the group that is not with one of the two teachers. She has been working on identity statements, yes-no questions, and "not" statements, using pictures of objects.

Group 2. As with Group 1, the beginning of the year was spent in review of material from last year. The materials for identity statements, "not" statements, yes-no questions, and plurals used with Group 1 were also used with this group. The pace was somewhat slower, with a greater number of examples given for each.

To teach parts of the body, I took Bereiter and Engelmann's suggestion and used one of the students. I found that instead of grasping the concept of parts of a body, the children simply grasped the child. Because the children are close to one another physically, I decided that it was better for each child to use his own body. We played a game similar to "Simon Says." I told them, "Touch your head, touch your leg," etc. This worked much better, and I was better able to see which children knew which body part.

Group 3. We began with identity and "not" statements. A portion of each day was spent identifying objects and pictures. They were able to repeat the complete identity statements the first day.

The "not" statements are going more slowly. By the end of the first week the children still were unable to make "not" statements without help. We worked on saying it together and individually. They were able to make plural statements without trouble, but again they had difficulty using plurals in a "not" statement.

Next, we began polars. Big and fat were the only ones covered. The children found the chalk board pictures very funny. They particularly enjoyed erasing the pictures as they named them.

II. ARITHMETIC

Group 1. (Mrs. H.) Arithmetic for Group 1 has so far consisted in rote counting up to 23. Stress has also been placed on counting from a numeral to a numeral (e.g., counting from three to ten). Two of the children in this group can do this task very well, but the others have some difficulty, so we review this every day. We also do drills on numeral recognition (1 to 9). The children can identify the equals sign and the plus sign. We reviewed the equal rule, and all the children can recite this rule. Much of the arithmetic work is done on the board. The children like to come to the board individually and either cross the numeral out or erase it after identifying it. This group can do two lessons a day, but when they start learning new concepts, they will probably do just one lesson.

Group 3. (Mrs. M.) The first week of arithmetic consists in rote counting to five and symbol identification of 5. The program is set down in a day-by-day manner by Bereiter and Engelmann. The group had little trouble identifying the symbol 5. There was some confusion when they had to identify a symbol that was not 5. Rather than use the sheets in the book, which the children would not look at, I made individual cards with numerals on them. Each child chose a card and identified the numeral as 5 or not 5.

Rote counting was another matter. The children did well with one and two, but after that they just said any number. I went through the group individually and had them count with me. This was better, but none of the children could count without my help. So I reduced the rote counting to three and used objects to hold the children's attention.

III. READING (Mrs. H.)

All the children are supposed to participate in reading each day for 20 minutes. We have shortened the period to 10 minutes the first two days of the week and 15 minutes the third and fourth days, because it is very difficult for a three-year-old child to sit on a chair and do such concentrated work for such a long time.

Group 1. This group is moving very rapidly through the reading lessons, doing two and three lessons a day simply because they have retained the sounds and other techniques, such as rhyming and blending, from last year. I am now doing symbol action games with them. I present two actions (e.g., tap head and clap hands) in sequence for eight times and say, "I'm doing it the right way." Then I ask the group to do it about four times. This is really a pre-reading exercise, by which the children learn to do things in sequence; reading requires a comprehension of sequence, since the child must learn to pronounce letters one after the other and from left to right and then must make sense out of a sequence of letters that form a word and a sequence of words that form a sentence.

This group would know the sequence before I had finished demonstrating it, so I knew they could go on to the next part of the lesson, which is "blending-say it fast." The teacher presents a word that is broken into parts and the children are asked to "say it fast." Then the group is to identify the word by saying it at a normal speaking rate. This activity is very easy for this group; they yell out the word as soon as I have completed it.

The third part of the lesson is sounds. The first step is to identify the new sound--this sound is mmmmm. The teacher traces this sound in the notebook. The sounds are also placed on arrows so that children get used to reading from left to right. This group knows the rule: An arrow tells us to go from left to right.

After the children identify the sounds, they are given work-sheets (or take-homes) which are geared to what they have learned. They were able to trace M, A, S, F, E the first week because they remembered them from last year. The teachers realized that this group will be able to move rapidly until they come to a reading lesson that they have never had. Each day, the children take home their completed work-sheets as a reward for good work.

Group 2. This group has been doing one lesson a day. They do the same four parts that Group 1 does (symbol action, blending, sounds, and worksheets). They have difficulty tracing their worksheet sounds. I will try having them first trace the sounds with their fingers and then use crayons instead of pencils.

Two girls were unable to identify the sound so they did not receive a worksheet. I felt they really knew mmmmm, but they were restless and bothering others. The next day they wanted a worksheet, so they responded accordingly. There are seven children in this group, which is a disadvantage. Some of the children have problems seeing the notebook, especially if they sit on the ends. I would recommend no more than five in a reading group if you want their full attention and cooperation.

Group 3. There are seven three-year-olds in this group. This is really too large a group. They are very restless and inattentive. It is very hard to keep their attention for the entire time. Many of them are sleepy, so I would prefer to have reading as the first activity of the day for them. It is also hard to get them to watch your fingers as you move them to different sounds in the notebook. They want to fixate on the first sound on the page you point to, and every other sound on the page is the same to them as the first sound. We use candy for rewards in all groups, and this works especially well with Group 3; they know they have to work hard if they want candy.

CHILD MANAGEMENT

Group 1. Only one child had any difficulty readjusting to the school day. She comes from a Greek-speaking family and had spent the summer abroad. She was unwilling the first day to make any verbal response. The second day Mrs. H. was to make a home visit to this child's house, and I told her Mrs. H. would not be able to come if she did not work. This was the encouragement she needed, since she did start to work.

It is important to constantly tell the children they are good workers and smart. We end each period with exaggerated handshakes for those who have been "good workers."

Group 2. One of the girls was quick to tell me--constantly, I might add--that she was saying what I asked for. I found, though, that she was not really listening to what I said but said anything, just to appear to be working. This child is also a thumb sucker. In times of boredom or tiredness the thumb goes into her mouth.

Toward the end of the week we introduced candy rewards for those who were working well. In our program, working well means sitting in one's chair, responding verbally, and paying attention. This type of reinforcement is working well with this group. They are able to stay with a task longer and give better attention to it.

The candy reward worked well with Robin. Early in the first week, Robin sat next to me and kept taking my papers off the table. If I removed his hands he scratched my hands. I withheld an object the others were allowed to hold, and this brought him around to where he did not scratch me. With the candy, he would do as asked when I told him he would not be given any.

One three-year-old was moved into this group from Group 3 because she would not work or remain in her seat. We felt that if she were in a group with four-year-olds who knew what was expected of them she might improve. So far, this has worked to a limited degree. She now sits in her seat for longer stretches of time and has begun to join in the verbal responses of the group.

Group 3. Of all the groups, the candy worked best with Group 3. They could see immediately what behavior was correct.

Bonnie is one of two children who did not make complete identity statements. She would make a statement by herself but would not respond with the group. Objects and candy have been withheld from her, and she has been making a greater effort; but she still has to be encouraged to talk with the group.

Joel is similar in his actions to Bonnie. He seems shy but is also lazy. He will work if he has to or is forced to do it.

Jackie is a very willful child and uses tears to get her way. She can turn them off and on very quickly. Candy works wonders with her. She can make some of the best responses of the entire group when she wants to.

NOTES

Part of the value of these monthly narrative reports is the chance they afford to review the innovations and modifications the teachers have made in the parent Bereiter-Engelmann program. This should be especially instructive to teachers who are beginning to implement a language training curriculum based on the B-E model, for these teachers will have in hand a supplement to the B-E materials that provides insight gained through practice.

Of equal importance will be the spelling out of problems that have actually been encountered in the classroom with curriculum tasks and with the management of children "in the spirit of" Bereiter and Engelmann's approach.

One potential source of difficulty in this curriculum is the fact that it is handed down to teachers from on high. Often the teachers do not know why they are doing something, or why they are doing it in a particular way; they only know that this is the way it has been delivered to them in the materials. Sometimes their attempts to implement the materials as given meet with failure, and this failure cannot always be ascribed to causes outside the curriculum.

Each monthly report, aside from being a description of what is happening in the classroom, is an attempt to (1) clarify some of the issues raised as a consequence of the independent and critical thinking of the Ypsilanti B-E teachers, and (2) pinpoint the positive contributions these teachers are making to the Ypsilanti Language Training Curriculum. As such, these reports are essentially a distillation of the teachers' own detailed weekly writups.

[the "not" statement]

So far, we have come upon one hint of an important conflict between what the teachers have observed and what the curriculum requires. That conflict has been in the use of "not" statements. The B-E rationale for initially emphasizing the negative attribute ("that is not red") rather than the positive attribute ("that is green") is, so far as our teachers have been able to ascertain, that the "not" statement represents the single-concept approach--an object is either

red or not red, so only one concept (red) has been introduced--and this should be easier for the child than two concepts at one time, e.g., red and green. The teacher found, however, that the children are more confused by not statements and learn them more slowly than they do opposites (e.g., they learn "short" and "not short" more slowly than "short" and "long"). The teachers did not make any changes in the language curriculum to correspond with their observation, since such changes, they felt, would have been fundamental and thus drastic with regard to the research end of the program.

The very latest B-E materials recognize the problem of the not statement; opposites will now be used together with not statements.

[the category label "vehicles"]

The children have had some difficulty remembering to call "things that take you places" "vehicles"; the teachers feel that this is a word the children seldom, if ever, hear outside the classroom, and that it could be replaced by the rule for the category itself: vehicles would be called "things that take you places."

[use of real objects]

A modification made in the teaching of categories and identity statements was the introduction of objects to complement the pictures in the B-E booklets. The teachers feel that this makes the lessons more concrete; by giving the kids objects to touch and manipulate, the category labels and identity statements related to these objects become more meaningful to the kids, and their responses become more than simple parroting. Incidentally, the parrot in the B-E booklet who knows only one response is a favorite of the children--they find his "mistakes" very funny.

Identity statements have also been made more flexible by the teachers' response to the realities of common speech. When, for example, a child was pointing to a ball, he was expected to say, "This is a ball," but often the response would be, "That is a ball," which is the way most people would refer to something they were pointing to. The teachers have accepted this natural variation of the standard B-E language pattern.

October Report
(last two weeks)

OPENING AND CLOSING PERIODS

We continue to have the children identify their name symbols and hang up their coats and hats above them on entering the school building. One child still does not go directly to her symbol. She is usually the last one in the building, and it may be that the other coats are covering her symbol and hook. In November we will use turkey symbols, the same symbol for each child, with their names printed on them.

Some of the children are having difficulty unbuttoning their coats. We help them on one day and have them try it themselves the next day. We also tell them that they can play with the buttoning boards for further practice.

During the play time the children are getting better at doing only one activity at a time and putting away what they have used before going on to another activity. The musical cue to clean up has helped them complete this task at a more rapid pace. More children are taking books from the shelves and looking through them, and the children are beginning to play with one another. Some share puzzles or peg boards. All begin doing something as soon as they have hung up their coats.

Jackie is one of our more delightful children during these times. During one play period, she "read" and told the story of the three pigs, and for another whole play period, she sang, accompanying herself on the counting frame which she strummed like a guitar. She wants to know when we will sing "Cows in the Pasture." Our aide says she sings on the bus constantly.

Almost all children are singing the songs. One child does not seem to understand that he can sing. It may be he has not sung before and will improve in time. We are encouraging him. Our high school aide is playing the piano for singing. This is a great help, since it allows one teacher to work with one table of children while the other works with the rest.

The stories we have been reading at the close of each day have emphasized identity statements, polars, and body parts. For body parts, we concentrated on fingers; each finger and thumb is identified in the book, and the children use their own hands to demonstrate. This book is popular with the children because it gives them something to do while they are listening.

The children seem to enjoy the stories more. There are very few problems in keeping them quiet. Some of them get so interested and excited about the story that they get up on their knees; and then the rest of them say, "I can't see." We will usually stop the story and sit them down, or if it is just one or two children, an aide or the teacher who is not reading the story will go over to them and help them down.

On one day we did not have a closing story, because at least half of the children were out with bad colds and coughs. We had sent notes home to the parents asking them to keep unwell children home; the parents hate to have their children miss any school.

During the last week of the month, we concluded the days by doing "Two Little Witches," a version of "Two Little Blackbirds." This is a finger game we did for the parents at our Halloween party.

The children are dismissed by symbol if they were doing the proper activity. These activities have included sitting like an Indian, singing, and identifying a finger by name.

SEMI-STRUCTURED TIME

Semi-structured time for the third week started with teaching the difference between a pumpkin and a jack-o-lantern. The teachers made a big pumpkin for the blackboard. After we talked about its parts, we put on eyes, nose, and mouth and then called it a jack-o-lantern. We used the identity statements to name these parts. We also had Casper the Ghost and the moon on the blackboard, and we identified these. We gave each child a dittoed paper with a jack-o-lantern on it. We talked about the proper color to use, and then they were given an orange crayon. The teachers passed out the picture

only to those who were ready--sitting on chairs and not talking. We had to help three children who were not holding their crayons the right way. When the children had finished coloring, our high school girl cut the pictures out and placed them on the board. This was the first time their work had been displayed, and the next day they all went straight to the blackboard to look for their jack-o-lanterns.

Another activity was to place the name symbols in a big circle on the floor. We called the children's names one at a time and they went and sat on their symbols. We sang, "Where is ----?" All the children used their pointing finger to point to the child being named in the song. That child then had to stand up and say, "Hi," or "Here I am." The purpose of this activity was to help the children learn each other's names. We then dismissed for juice by calling the children singly by name; each child took his name symbol to the juice table and placed it wherever he wanted to sit. This activity went very well, and the children's response was encouraging.

Monday of the fourth week we had made pumpkin shapes on orange construction paper, and the children were instructed to cut out these figures. We reviewed the proper technique for holding the scissors and also talked about staying on the line. Some children still have difficulty holding the scissors. Wilbur did not listen to the instructions and proceeded to cut the pumpkin into little pieces. All the children did a good job cutting the fat part of the pumpkin, but many of them cut off the stem. The children were proud of the finished project and were anxious to take the pumpkins home.

After Monday we realized that it was difficult for many of the children to keep their eyes on the line, especially one that went around like the pumpkin's, so we drew a diagonal line from one corner of the paper to another, and they were to cut on this. This was much easier for them. Joel really learned how to use the scissors that day. After they finished with one line, we would draw another line for them to cut on. Many of the children cut better using their first and second fingers, but we first instructed them to use their first and third fingers.

On Friday we gave every child a piece of green paper, and they cut these into tiny pieces, so we could use them as leaves. We had

drawn the parts of the tree on the bulletin board, identified these parts with the whole group, and talked about why a tree has roots, branches, etc.

The next week, our emphasis was on gross motor development, specifically, the ability to transfer and generalize self concepts and body locations. The children were asked to make themselves small, tall, straight, crooked, fat, skinny, little, big, fast, slow, and to play dead. Once they got the idea of changing their body positions, they enjoyed the activity. These exercises were repeated over several days to give the children time to become more familiar with the idea.

In transferring physical body locations, we walked a balance beam and ran an obstacle course set up by the teachers. The beam was set at different heights on different days. All the children were able to walk the balance beam and enjoyed doing it. One little girl would follow the obstacle course only when told to do so, and one little boy (Joel) was quite stiff in his motions.

Language--i.e., the polars and the words that signify the body locations and directions of movement--was not stressed in these exercises, but, of course, the children had to understand the verbal commands in order to do the activities.

During the last days of the month, we made little pumpkins from strips of orange paper and masks from large grocery sacks. The teachers had stapled the strips of paper at the bottom, and the children were instructed to bring the ends of the strips up so we could staple them together. Some of the children had no difficulty with this, but others were unable to hold on to all the ends at one time. A stem was placed on the top of the pumpkins. The children were each given a black crayon and told to make a face on the pumpkins. We placed the finished pumpkins on top of the piano, and the children were told they could take them home after our Halloween party.

For the masks, the teachers had cut out the faces and arm holes, and the children had colored the paper sacks. The older children drew body figures on their sacks. Two of the older girls

wrote their names in big letters. The next day the children placed ears on the sacks with little pieces of adhesive tape. After everyone was finished, they put their masks on and went to the mirrors to see what they had made. Last year, during the Halloween party, two children had been frightened by what they saw in the mirror, so we thought that putting the masks on now would help to assure that this would not happen at the party this year.

We taught the children the following fingerplay:

Two little witches sitting on a hill,
One named Jack (wiggle one finger),
The other named Jill (wiggle other finger).
Fly away Jack (hand behind back),
Fly away Jill (other hand beind back);
Come back Jack (hand in front),
Come back Jill (hand in front).

We did this for the mothers who came to the Halloween party. We made little witches out of paper for one finger of each hand. The paper was cone-shaped for the body, head and hat, and "donut" circles were used for the brim around the hat. This was a good exercise in following directions; we wanted the children to listen to the teacher as she told them what piece to pick up next. The two youngest children had a difficult time paying attention. After they put one part on, they would immediately pull it off. After about the third time, the teacher told them that they would have to leave the table if they did this again and that they would not have any witches for the party. They left the witches alone after that.

SUBJECT AREAS

I. LANGUAGE (Mrs. M.)

Group 1. Categories covered: food, clothing, things to write with, plants, animals, and persons.

Magazine pictures were used for foods, and pencils and pens were used for things you write with. The Peabody Language Development cards illustrating articles of clothing are large and nicely drawn;

the children like to hold them and find them interesting.

I have had some trouble with the rule for things you write with, which is identical to the category label: "things you write with are things you write with." What I did to "resolve" this was to phrase the rule in the form of a question: "Is it something you write with?" This same awkwardness would attach to the category of vehicles if we eliminated the label "vehicles" and called them "things that take you places."

The rule for plants is: "It's a plant if it grows in the ground." The children could not think of a tree as a plant. I imagine this is because of its size.

There is no rule for the category of persons. We identified mother, father, sister, brother, grandmother, and grandfather from pictures. I asked the children to tell me the name of one of their cousins. From this we talked about cousins being of both sexes. Then, I asked what you call your cousin's mother and father, and from this we got aunt and uncle. We also noted that a person could be called several things, such as, girl, sister, and child.

The most popular polars were cold (the children passed a glass of ice around), dark (I turned off the lights and pulled down the shades), and fast (I shot the eraser down the chalk ledge). Making these words refer to concrete objects and events has proved very useful in helping the children to learn them. Other polars are visualized through chalk drawings on the blackboard.

During the last days of the month, the polars became more difficult: empty, new, beautiful, handsome, and ugly. The children especially enjoy ugly, since this gives them an opportunity to make faces. We began multiple polars--two or more polars to describe an object. Since this is difficult, I began by using only two polars instead of four as suggested in the B-E book. I drew pictures on the blackboard of a fat and long man and a short and skinny man. The children did better with fat-tall than with fat-long; a more realistic example for fat-long would have been a long and fat snake compared with a long and skinny snake.

We have continued to review colors and have added the concepts "light" and "dark" to brown, green, and blue. Another object characteristic that we have begun to study is pattern (plaid, checked, etc.) We have had to make up our own rules, or definitions, for patterns, since B and E do not supply them. We began with flowered and striped patterns, presenting six of each to the children, who had to say, "This pattern is . . . ." They also drew these patterns and identified them from a pile of clothing. Plaid and checked are confusing; the children are not sure of the difference.

Another object characteristic that has presented some difficulty is material (leather, plastic, wood, etc.). Wood and plastic often look a great deal alike, as do plastic and glass. I had the children look for wood grains. A sure, but hazardous, way of distinguishing glass from plastic is to try to break glass and plastic objects.

Part-whole relationships: Mitten, jar, and box were difficult for the children; they were confused because, in the B-E script, a part of an object is sometimes given the name of the whole and is sometimes called the "body." Thus, a jar could have a lid, mouth, neck, and "body," but B and E call the body "jar"; on the other hand, B and E call the main part of a wagon the "body." The children, having previously learned to identify the body of a wagon, wanted to say body for jar. Similarly, in the B-E book, mitten has the parts "thumb" and "mitten," but the children wanted to say "body" instead of "mitten." I did not really modify the presentation as prescribed by B and E but hope the new materials will take these troubles into account. What I did was to tell the children they were right when they wanted to call the main part of something the body but that another name for it is . . . (e.g., another name for the body of a bottle is "bottle").

I have been doing two part-whole tasks a day with this group, using both concrete objects and pictures; I have found that this is too much for them, so I will cut it down to one a day.

Group 2. I have divided this group in half; it was too large a group to work with and keep everyone going at once. Now, half the group works with puzzles or beads with the high school aide while I work with the rest of the group very hard and rapidly for ten minutes. Then the two small groups change places. I have found this arrangement to be a great help--we get a lot more work done this way.

Two of the three-year-olds in this group have been moved to Group 3, while one of the children from Group 1 has been moved to this group. This last child was moved because he had been falling behind; the other two were subsequently taken out of this group to make it even numbered, since it had been split in half.

Of all the groups this is the most difficult to keep moving. They are distracted by the slightest thing and get bored very easily. It may well be that I will have to return to the candy reward, which was phased out, to keep them working.

Polars: I have found that pictures do not always convey the desired polar. For example, I drew the sun and a stove on the board, and neither seemed to convey "hot" to the children. A real cup of hot water did the trick, however. Pictures of "dark" did not work too well either; it is better to darken the room than to show a picture. It is also better to show real water than a picture of water. For "rough" I used a "Touch Me" book. The children enjoy this but get distracted by it; they want to keep touching and forget to say, "this is rough" or "this is not rough."

Body parts: While the children know the major body parts, they are not sure of the lesser units--nostrils, pupils, waist, wrist, etc. They are getting bored with body parts, and I plan to leave them now and return to them later in the year. On the days we did parts of the leg and trunk, however, the children were not bored: everyone had an opportunity to examine his own and everyone else's navel!

Object characteristics: I began work on shapes. All sizes of squares were presented; we counted the sides of a square, and I pointed out that all sides were the same size. Next, we talked about a circle being round and triangle having three sides. When I presented the circle, square, and triangle together, I found that the children were

unable to tell which was which. So I took a step back and worked with them only on the square and circle. I will reintroduce the triangle next month.

Group 3. I began the introductory category of animals with this group. Farm animals come first, and these were shown with the Peabody Pictures. The children are also making an animal book with dittoed pictures. They knew only a few animal's names when we began this category, but we were soon able to move on to wild animals. The children have little idea of size, so I included "big," "not big," and "small" in our discussions. One of the children wanted to know if the animals would eat him; I explained that these were only pictures of animals and that the animals in the zoo were in cages. The children had trouble remembering the names of the animals, so each day we reviewed the old ones and learned a new one.

As with Group 2, these children are tiring of body parts, though we continue to work on them. I have found that the children are better at pointing to a body part than naming it.

Object characteristics: The children's ability to identify square and circle has varied. I have gone back to working just on squares, using cutouts, chalk drawings, and shapes for them to cut out. I feel they are just parroting what I say and are not really looking at the shapes.

All the children in this group are now responding verbally, using the identity statements, not statements, and plural statements; they vary greatly in the degree to which they will use these statements and use them correctly.

Polars: We have worked on two polars at a time--"short" and "slow," and "fast" and "long." Fast and slow were the most popular--the children enjoyed clapping fast and not fast, stamping their feet slow and not slow, etc.

With the changes in the other two groups, eight children are left in this group. We have divided this group into two sub-groups, and Harriett, our high school aide, works with one sub-group while I work with the other. Activities are planned for Harriett to present.

Harriett comes from the Type A Special Education classes at the high school. She works quite well with the group as long as she is told exactly what to present and how to present it. Activities include counting objects, sorting shapes, making identity statements, and using skill games to teach snapping and working a zipper.

II. ARITHMETIC

Group 1. (Mrs. H.) Starting from a number other than 1, this group is able to count to 25. After the rote counting, we do equations: 1 + 0 = 1 through 10 + 1 = 11. They know the first three or four equations, but it is difficult for them to remember the rest. After we say each equation, we clap three times. We also started counting backwards from 5, making believe we are doing the countdown for a rocket. They like to do this themselves, but when they do, they always skip some numbers.

Symbol identification: The children can identify numerals up to 17. Only one girl is having any difficulty; the other three scream them out. Special emphasis was placed on 6, 9, and 0, since there is some resemblance between these. Eliana, the girl who is having trouble, confuses the numeral 9 with the sound d.

Equality: I drew lines on the board and then an equals sign; the children would come to the board individually, count the lines, and then draw the same number of lines on the other side of the equals sign. Another way I do this is to have them yell out the number of lines that should be on the other side of the equals sign.

We also played teacher. If a child was working especially hard, she was chosen to be the teacher. This is a great reward for them.

Group 3. (Mrs. M.) Rote counting to 5 has gone very slowly. I use concrete objects and a counting frame to hold the children's attention, but for a long time they were not able to count without me. I backtracked and did counting to 3 instead of to 5, and this worked better. Counting together presents a problem, since I cannot always tell who is counting in the proper order. By the end of the month, all but two of the children were able to count to 5. These two do not seem to understand the idea of numbers following one another in a

set order. More opportunity for individual work with these children would be a great help, but for research purposes, we are not making visits to the homes of three-year-olds this year. I know that one of the children who is having trouble has had very little experience with counting at home, so home visits could also have made practice with counting a permanent feature of her home environment.

Symbol identification: We worked on 4 and 5, using both the B-E sheets and the blackboard. The blackboard has the advantage that the children are all able to see at the same time. They also enjoy erasing a numeral when they have identified it.

By the end of the month, the children knew 4 and were getting quite good at identifying 5 alone and mixed with other numerals. They like to cross out or erase a 5 and say, "Goodbye 5." As with shapes, it took quite a while before I felt confident that the children were really seeing the symbols 4 and 5 and understanding that they stood for the numbers four and five; often they would say "five" when shown a series of 5's, and the same with 4's, but when the two were put together, and the children were asked to sort 4's and 5's, many of them had difficulty.

This group is divided in half for arithmetic, as they are for language. Harriett, our high school aide, works with one sub-group on sorting and identifying numerals.

III. READING (Mrs. H.)

Group 1. This is an enjoyable group to work with. They really like to do the reading sounds. Two of the girls are always asking if they can do a page by themselves. These girls never have any difficulty at all with the sound pages. Two of the children cannot do the reading sounds without stopping, especially if the word has four sounds. All the children can hardly wait to get to their workbooks. They are really proud of these books, and they cannot wait to take them home. They like to do the exercises, but they have some problems making the sounds by themselves; they know what goes in the boxes, but they do not know how to start making the sound without the tracing lines. They finished lesson 32 on Friday of the third week of school, which is ahead of schedule. This

group has been moving at such a fast pace that one of the children, the only boy in the group, began to fall behind. So he was moved to Group 2. Now the group consists of four sharp girls. They like to do everything that is in the lesson and they cannot wait to get to their workbooks. I make big stars on their pages if they do a good job. After workbooks we do the stories and writing sheets. We all read the story together, and then as they finish their work, they "read" it individually for me.

Group 2. Wilbur, a young three-year-old, is really the leader in this group. He was responsible for the highlight of our reading lessons this month. As we were doing a sound page, he pulled up his top shirt to show me his undershirt, which said, "Snoopy for President"; Wilbur said, "Look, teacher, here is a sss and here is another sss and this is eee." Words cannot express how I felt. This kind of experience really makes your teaching worthwhile. Who says a three-year-old can't read? !

Reading for Group 2 consists of symbol action games, blending (say it fast), sounds, and rhyming. Rhyming seems to give them the most difficulty. When the teacher says, "Rhymes with fatman, bat---" the children are to respond by saying "batman." Many of them just say "man." This is corrected by the teacher saying it the right way.

The older children are able to trace their sounds, but more time needs to be spent helping the younger children in this group. The four-year-olds could go faster, but the three-year-olds need more review, and some of the older children have been helping them.

The candy reward is being slowly phased out, as it was in Group 1. This has not affected the children's work--they are used to working hard and continue to do so. Now they get seals for rewards, and usually everybody gets one for hard work. They are doing about one new lesson a day.

These children are able to identify five sounds, the latest one being F. They are having some trouble putting their teeth down on the lower lip to make this sound.

Group 3. Group 3 has been having reading after semi-structured time. They were always restless and inattentive because they were tired. They now have reading first thing in the morning, and this has worked out so much better. Their attention span is much longer, they seem to be able to remember the sounds from one day to the next, and they have learned three sounds. The hardest part of the reading for them is the sound sheet (work sheet). They were unable to trace the sounds at first. They can put the crayon on the big dot, but instead of staying on the line they just scribble all over the page. I demonstrated to them the right way, and they know when I do it the wrong way. I think the reason is that a three-year-old is just not coordinated enough to do such a task. So instead of their doing the little work sheets, I made big copies of the sound to be traced, and each copy had only one sound on it. This worked better. I still make the children do these big sound sheets first, and then the little sound sheets. They are getting much more adept at tracing the sound on the big sheet, and I hope the little sheets will soon be easier for them. One day, Joel refused to do his, and he was moved away from the group; he sat there for one hour. Finally, after juice was over, I noticed that he was doing the tracing. I immediately gave him lots of praise and some crackers, since he had missed juice. He has worked hard every day since then. Gordy likes to trace the sounds, but he has had the most difficulty staying on the line. He likes to say he can't do it, but the minute you offer some assistance he tries very hard to do it the right way. Bonnie traces the sound, but she does it over and over again.

I realized that Group 3 was too large for me to be truly effective with them. Only two of the children were able to keep up with two or three lessons a week. I decided to split up this group into two sections, with four children in each. The splitting was done randomly, and it was surprising to see how it turned out: each group or section, has two slow children and two faster children. Each section has ten minutes of reading while the other section works with our high school aide. This seems to work much, much better. The time period is just long enough for the three-year-olds; I feel that they work harder now than they did when the period was twenty minutes long. If I do not have time for the sound sheets, they will take them to the aide's table, and she helps them. This varies from day to day. If at all possible, I try to do it myself.

Section A in Group 3 does about two new lessons a week. Section B, I felt, needed to go back to lesson 1. I still have difficulty getting them to look at the book and say the sound when I point to it. I continually look at the book and not at the children. Blending--Say it Fast is going much better. If a child is not working, I do not show him the picture for the story we just talked about. This seems to work very effectively. As soon as everyone has seen the picture, this child starts yelling any words that he remembers hearing me say. Rhyming is still presenting difficulty. I cannot get them to say the whole word without coaching: "Say the whole word." Tracing the sound is the most improved activity; they are all doing a good job, and some of them like to trace the sound two or three times.

The group as a whole can identify four sounds (m, a, s, ē). It is hard to keep their attention focused on the book. Some of them look at other children to see what sounds they are yelling and just imitate whatever the other children are doing.

There was some difficulty in getting the children to do the symbol action games. They contain three parts that are to be done in sequence. Most of the children would do one or two and then stop. Now the symbol action games are going much better. I find I get better responses when I call on the children individually.

CHILD MANAGEMENT (Mrs. H.)

In this program, it is very important that everyone work together and do things the right way. If a child is presenting some discipline problems or annoying others, he is placed in a little room and after a few minutes one of the teachers will talk to him. Since school has started, we have only had to do this twice. It probably sounds much worse than it really is.

To reinforce the children for working hard, we have been using candy rewards. We have considered this a temporary measure, and with some groups in certain subject areas, it has been easily phased out--the children were able to work hard without a material reward. In reading, Groups 2 and 3 continued to receive the candy reward until I decided to show them my approval in a different way.

After a group does a page in the reading book, I call on the children individually to identify the sounds. If they do it correctly, I tickle them. They really think this is great. I feel this is a better form of positive reinforcement, and I also like it because I will not get so fat this way. One cannot imagine how many M and M's are eaten by a teacher when she teaches two groups. We have cut out the candy completely. The children sometimes ask for it, but we tell them they are too smart and they can work hard without candy.

As a reward for Group 2, I got Mr. Peabo, a Peabody hand puppet. One of the children, Wilbur, is deathly afraid of it. He backs out of his seat and nearly cries. To try to get him over his fear, we got Mr. Peabo out during story time. I asked who would like to work the puppet, and all the children said, "I do," except for Wilbur, who called out just as loudly, "I don't, I don't!" We will continue to work with him.

There has been quite a bit of shuffling between groups during this first month of school. Most of the changes have had to be made because certain children have a hard time paying attention for the time required. Russell, for example, was moved from Group 2 to Group 1 for language because Mrs. M. felt he could do the work; but he was easily distracted and eventually began to fall behind, so he was returned to Group 2. Laura was moved from Group 3 to Group 2 and back again for the same reason--her attention span is not long enough for the more rapid pace, and it was difficult to keep her in step with the rest of the group.

NOTES

[name symbols]

Beginning in November, the children's name symbols will all be the same, with their names printed on them. The symbol for November will be the turkey. The teachers expect the children to be able to recognize the shapes of their printed names. It is important to make each symbol exactly the same, so that the children are forced to concentrate on their names; if there is a smudge on a symbol, or if a letter is crooked, the child might shrewdly pick out these flaws and use them to identify his symbol.

[object characteristics]

The B-E materials for the first semester have responded to certain difficulties of content and presentation by simply eliminating them from the curriculum. For example, no rules were given in the old materials for identifying patterns, so the teachers came up with these themselves; their rule for "checked" is "equal-sized boxes," and their rule for "plaid" is "boxes with lines running through them." The new materials have deleted plaid, probably because it is too hard for children, as the teachers have found. They have also eliminated "material" (wood, glass, plastic, etc.), probably for the same reason.

[categories]

The order of presentation of categories has changed, but it is not clear what this order is based on. It may be just arbitrary, or it may be Bereiter and Engelmann's idea of a progression from simplest to most complex.

November Report

OPENING AND CLOSING PERIODS

We got the telephones out for the children to use during opening play period. They are very popular, and there is always a hurry to get one.

We gave the children a new task this month. Because we felt they all knew their symbols, we made eighteen turkeys, printed the name of each child on a turkey, and put one turkey up under each coat hook. All but two of the children from last year identified their own names immediately. We are using the same procedure for Juice Time. The children come from the bathroom and sit where they find their own names. We also use these symbols for dismissal. The children sing (Jackie continues to be the top singer; every day she yells out "Cows in the pasture, moo, moo, moo"), and each one watches for the teacher to hold up his name. When a child sees his name, he goes and puts on his coat. By the end of the month about half of the children could identify their own names, and several children were able to recognize the names of other children as well.

SEMI-STRUCTURED TIME

This month the children learned how to paste. We divided them into two groups, two adults working with each group, and taught them to use only their index finger to spread the paste by demonstrating this procedure ourselves. The first pasting task was to paste 3-inch circles and squares onto construction paper. We chose these particular shapes to reinforce verbal identification of circles and squares. The next task was pasting parts of a mitten and parts of an apple onto an outline drawing of an apple and a mitten. The children had no difficulty with the pasting itself, and surprisingly enough, no one tried eating it. On the first day, they did wipe their hands off on their clothes and under the tables. This stopped for the most part after the first day because the children knew they would be washing their hands right after the activity.

For one week we spent ten or fifteen minutes a day making turkeys, which involved identifying the parts of the turkey and pasting them onto a line drawing. Some of the parts were too difficult for the children to paste, so the teachers had to help them quite a bit. They were really proud of their turkeys when they finally finished them. They wanted to take them home immediately, but we told them to wait until it was closer to Thanksgiving.

Another activity was playing with clay. Different polars--long and skinny snakes, fat hamburgers, and tall objects--were stressed. At the end of the period, we told the children they could take their clay home, which cut down on their trying to conceal and keep their clay after the activity.

SUBJECT AREAS

I. LANGUAGE (Mrs. M.)

Group 1. We continued working with multiple polars: fat and long, skinny and short, tall and fat, long and straight. Instead of using two pictures of the opposites, I used four pictures, only one of which showed both qualities. For example, for fat and long I used the following pictures:

(1) (2) (3) (4)

(1) This cone is fat and long.

(2) This cone is fat, but not long.

(3) This cone is not fat and not long.

(4) This cone is not fat, but it is long.

Skinny and short, tall and fat, and long and straight were covered in the same way. The group is quite good at identifying the objects with the multiple characteristics and those without. From time to time, however, they need to be reminded of the two polars being used.

The categories we covered were buildings--do you walk into it?--and cooking utensils--do you use it to cook with? I used magazine pictures and picture postcards to illustrate buildings. Since the group knew the buildings rule, I felt ten or so pictures of buildings provided an adequate representation of that category. I illustrated cooking utensils using pictures and toy cooking objects. One day the group told me what cooking utensils were needed to bake a cake, and I drew pictures of them on the board.

In part-whole relationships we discussed knife, hatchet, saw, shovel, and closet, in that order, as suggested by Bereiter and Engelmann. Had I been making the list, I would not have followed the first three with shovel. The first three share a blade in common, so it became natural for the children to call the scoop of the shovel a blade.

We also covered the parts of coffee pot, cat, and airplane. There were two parts of the airplane they had trouble with, propeller and fuselage. I cannot help but wonder if these are really necessary for them to know, especially in the jet age.

Object characteristics were paper, cardboard, leather, cloth, plaster, wood, and metal. It was very difficult for the children to tell leather from plastic, so I had them smell plastic and leather objects to try to show a difference. This helped only to a limited degree. Examples of plaster are quite difficult to find. One child, for example, said chalk was made of plaster, and indeed it looks and feels the same. I worked with leather and plastics on home visits, and, as a result, their understanding of these characteristics is a little bit better.

Group 2. The most successful activity this month was the category "persons" for which there is no rule. I used a picture of my own family, work sheets, and magazine pictures. The category was reinforced with stories of persons in the family. The

less common kinds of people like Indians were the children's favorites.

We worked on the parts of an umbrella, a wagon, and a kite. For the umbrella I used the book of parts and an actual umbrella. The parts of the wagon were easy for the children, but the parts of the kite were hard. Perhaps they are more familiar with wagons than kites; very few of them have flown kites, while all of them have ridden in or seen wagons.

The polars for the month were rough, crooked, light, empty, full, and old, which we presented through classroom demonstrations and pictures. Rough is still quite difficult for them, so I emphasize it whenever I can during the day. They also need more work on old.

The identification of shapes as object characteristics is going very well. We tried the kinesthetic approach and made a square, a circle, and a triangle out of sandpaper and mounted them on construction paper. It was my hope that feeling and seeing an object while naming it would help. We also traced and named the shape without seeing it. They got quite good at this. We are just beginning rectangles. None of these shapes, however, are new for the children, as all were covered last year.

Group 3. The polars for the month were tall, light, dark, and dry. Board and magazine pictures were used. For tall, we compared the size of the children with the size of the teacher. Most children think of themselves as being tall, which may be a reflection of being told, "Be a big boy (or girl)." The children enjoyed making the room light and not light by turning on and off the lights. I used dry and not dry objects for them to feel, but their understanding of dry is not too good. When I asked if water was dry, several said yes. They need more examples of this.

We finished reviewing parts of the body. We played the game "touch your ---." I also drew a head without features on the chalk board. As the children told me what parts were missing, I drew them in. We will go back to body parts later in the year.

The category of wild animals is coming slowly. I have gone back to three previously covered--monkey, giraffe, and camel (the favorite);almost all the children know these three now.

Julian is by far the best identifier of wild animals because he has had some previous experience with them.

As with Group 2 we used sandpaper shapes of a circle, a square, and a triangle. Being able to feel the shapes helped the children; they were able to identify the shapes better each week.

The language kit I ordered finally arrived. This is the published copy of the Bereiter-Englemann program. I found in looking over the materials that the order of presenting the program has changed. After vacation I will begin using these materials, and there will be a good bit of review for most of the groups.

II. ARITHMETIC

Group 1. This group of four girls started subtraction problems this month. We did two problems together from the book. Then, at the end of the class, usually the last five minutes, they each did two or three problems on the board, which was divided into four parts. They really liked doing this.

We counted forwards from 5 to 10 and backwards from 5 to 1. The children recited individually, so they really had to listen for themselves and not rely on others for clues. We also counted by twos (the fast way). This is a memorization task, but they really liked doing it.

Another part of the lesson was a story problem, which they really did not like. Perhaps the reason is that there are no pictures with the story, and they just have to listen to what I read.

We also identified the numerals 1 to 10 and 15, 18, and 17. Eliana and Brenda, especially Eliana, really are having trouble with these.

Group 3 (Mrs. M.) We have been counting to 5 all month, and it is getting better. All the children but Joel have the idea. Even Bonnie is getting better at counting. (She has been very slow at ordering numbers. She is having eye problems and is scheduled to be operated on in early December. This will be her second operation to correct her crossed eyes.) Next month we hope to begin counting to 6.

The symbol identification of 4 and 5 still is slow. I made sandpaper numerals, but even these did not help much, so we worked on identifying the numeral 1, because if they had one numeral they really knew, perhaps the others would come more easily. But even 1 is difficult for them.

III. READING (Mrs. H.)

Group 1. This group is following the same format they followed last month. We have never had to back up because they have no difficulty learning the new sounds. All of the girls love to do the reading sounds. Once in a while, Eliana and Brenda get [t] and [n] confused when one of these letters is the last letter in the word, because they are too anxious to go on to the next word. I am anxious for the words to get harder so they will have to think a little; I want to give them a challenge. I know they could do it.

After the reading sounds, we do spell by sounds. Brenda sometimes forgets to watch for the visual clue to move on to the next sound. The girls are always anxious to move on to the workbooks. This week the pages were different and more difficult, so more time was spent doing them. Instead of a picture and a sound in each box, there were two sounds in each box. They tended to make the sound they first made in all the boxes. They had trouble making the [a] and the [$\bar{e}$] and made mistakes all week.

One day, Sandy made no mistakes, so I put a big star on her page. Carol came up with her book, and she had made two mistakes. I did not put as big a star on her page. I looked at her about two minutes later, and there were big tears in her eyes. She had really been hurt. I had not made a big deal over Sandy's perfect paper, but Carol is very competitive and likes to be first and

do the work right, so she felt bad. I certainly had not planned to put pressure on the children during these activities. Brenda likes to scribble in her workbook, so finally I did not give her any star at all, and I could tell she was really thinking about it all. Then she did her story and writing sheet, and she did it beautifully. I am anxious to see what she does next month because she is capable of doing it the right way.

Group 2. Group 2 continued to do sounds, rhyming, blending, symbol action, and work sheets. This group is completely different from Group 1. I must work continually to make them pay attention, look at the book, and keep their hands off each other. If I successfully do all of these things, this group is fun to work with. They really do the lesson well when they are in the right mood. They like to do the sound pages individually, and if they do a fairly good job, I tickle them, a reward which means more to them than candy or food.

This group started to do spell by sounds this month. They wanted to do the hand movements themselves instead of watching mine and saying the sounds. They are also doing a good job on symbol action, which was hard for them at the beginning but is now a task they really enjoy.

Everyone in this group, except Lydia and Wilbur, are excellent tracers of sounds. Wilbur likes to go over the sound more than once. This is not surprising for Wilbur because he is only three, but Lydia was in the program last year and should be able to do a better job if she would only think about it. Wilbur wore his undershirt again that said "Snoopy for President," so he wanted to say the sounds [ē] and [s]. Robbin pulled his shirt up and his undershirt said "Snoopy." He announced that he had an [s] too.

I gave them work sheets that came with the Distar kits. Before receiving the kits, I had been using the work sheets we made ourselves, which were much bigger. We all thought these new worksheets were much too small. Robbin proceeded to tell me he did not want a little one, he wanted a big one. He took it anyway, and they all seemed to do a pretty good job on them except that Lydia scribbled over hers. She likes to trace over and over the sound,

and each time she goes over it, it gets further and further from the dotted line. I have talked to her about it, but she has not stopped doing it. This group is still divided into two sections, each of which meets for ten minutes, so I never seem to have time to do work sheets. Harriett, our high school aide, has been helping them with these, but I doubt if she sees to it that they start on the little dot.

Group 3. Section A is really moving along, only three lessons behind Group 2. Bonnie just knows [m]. She does have one crossed eye, so she may have visual problems. Laura says the sounds individually, but not in the group. Julian, who just turned three, really knows the sounds and is probably the leader of the group, so one might conclude that a child is never too young to begin reading. He does, however, have a terrible time tracing the sound sheet because he likes to scribble all over his paper.

Section B can only do about three new lessons a week. Angie and Jackie have trouble remembering all the sounds, and they seem to perseverate when they do a sound page. If there happens to be an ice cream cone on the page, they say ice cream cone for everything. They all do a good job tracing their sounds.

CHILD MANAGEMENT

Brenda has been returning to her old tricks of last year. She pouts and complains if you correct her. The best way to bring her around is to skip her turn and tell her she has missed it because of the way she is acting.

Laura is still creating problems. She does not come to the group and enjoys the attention gained by having the teacher come after her. We will have to take a different approach to her problem.

Billy missed two days last week. His brother hit him on the back of the head with a stapler and opened a huge gash. He returned to school Wednesday, stitches and all.

December Report

OPENING AND CLOSING PERIODS

The children continue finding their names and coat hooks with little difficulty. They have some trouble with buttons and boots now that the colder weather has come, but we work with individuals on this each day.

There were a great many visitors early in the month, and on several days the overflow sat in the main room, which was distracting for the children.

Instead of reading stories this month we practiced for our Christmas program. We gave a Christmas party on the Sunday before Christmas for the parents, sisters, and brothers. It was a real success, with about seventy people present. Santa Claus (a member of the research staff) was a big hit. The children all sat on his lap and told him what they wanted for Christmas, and he gave each one blocks and a candy bar.

SEMI-STRUCTURED TIME

These activities were all geared to Christmas and decorating the room for our Christmas party. We made Christmas tree mobiles and cut out different colored circles to put on the branches. We also pasted one- and two-inch circles onto a cutout Christmas tree for the bulletin board and made paper chains of different colors for it as well. We cut out red stockings, the children traced their names on them, and then we pasted cotton along the top. All the stockings were hung in the room.

One day the children cut out ornaments and decorated them the next day. These we put on the Christmas tree. They admire their own work greatly and enjoy seeing the ornaments on the tree.

We also practiced our singing and made reindeer masks for the children to wear for the program.

SUBJECT AREAS

I. LANGUAGE (Mrs. M.)

Group 1. We worked on the polars big and little, long and short, and empty and full. The change from single polars to opposites was quite easy for this group, and they were able to do both immediately. Opposite polars are introduced first with the "not" statement and then with the opposite.

The parts covered were those of a hat (crown, brim, and band), a cup (handle and bowl), and an egg. The children had a difficult time remembering the brim of the hat, probably because it was a term with which they were not familiar.

They enjoyed working with action statements because the pictures with which the concepts are presented are very amusing to them. We discussed standing, sitting, eating, jumping, sleeping a few each day with different examples of each. The girls enjoyed demonstrating the action statements themselves, especially the absurd statements.

The prepositions covered this week were over, in, and on. The children were a bit confused when a series of objects were placed one within the other. They had to be reminded,verbally and by pointing, which objects we were talking about.

Groups 2 and 3. These two groups are being covered together because the work they did was the same.

The polars covered were long-not long and empty-not empty. There were no problems with long and not long because we have covered these before. Empty and not empty were unfamiliar and more difficult concepts. Full and not full would have been more familiar to the children. I demonstrated the concept with glasses of water, but this did not really help.

We have been working with the following parts: pencil, shovel, cup, match. The parts of the match (head and stick) were followed by the parts of the shovel (handle and scoop). I would not have followed match with shovel because the children wanted to call the shovel handle the stick. It would have been better to present shovel after cup, which has a handle and a bowl.

In dealing with action statements the children would much rather pantomime the action than look at the pictures in the book.

II. ARITHMETIC

Group 1. (Mrs. H.) We counted by twos to twenty and backwards and forwards from different numbers. Counting backwards seemed to be a lot easier than counting forwards.

In story problems we used "plus" and the name of one of the children in the group. We usually do one story problem a day, but the children do not really like to do them.

Symbol identification: We worked on identifying the numerals through 20. The numeral 20 was very easy, but the numerals between 10 and 20 were difficult. Eliana and Brenda do not know the numerals as well as Carol and Sandy, who just shout them out.

The girls love to do subtraction problems. We read a problem, and then they tell me how many lines to make. They are showing an interest in using their fingers to find the answer. If time permits, we work problems on the boards. Brenda and Eliana some trouble marking the lines. They read the numeral, but when they start making the marks they forget how many they are supposed to make.

Group 3. (Mrs. M.) We are continuing with rote counting to six. At this point only Joel is unable to count by himself; he gets lost after two. Again, the home visit and individual work might help him.

Included in the new Distar materials are the exercises, counting to a number and counting objects. The object counting is a help in rote counting and visualizing a number of objects. In counting to a number, I do the counting and the children listen and tell what I counted to. After all our rote counting to six, the children wanted to say six no matter what I counted to. This eventually improved, however.

Also included in the new Distar arithmetic materials is a set of matching materials our high school aide is working with. She sets up a series of cards, and the children match the series. This was quite difficult for the children at first, but toward the end of the month they got much better at it.

Joel has become quite good at the symbol identification of 1 and 2. Most all the children are able to identify these two symbols now. We continue to play games to reinforce the identity.

III. READING (Mrs. H.)

Group 1. Although it rushed me to get everything done in twenty minutes, Group 1 did a new lesson every day, and they finished blending-spell by sound. They could not wait to finish reading sounds so they could do their workbooks. Eliana has some trouble doing hers. It seems as if she does not care how she does it but only wants to finish the page. They had to make a lot of s's in the boxes, and all of them have had reversal problems. Sandy still hurries through her work to be first done.

Group 2. This group did five lessons. Blending-spell by sound is the most difficult for them to do, and they do not enjoy doing it either. They can do the rhyming if I give then the first two syllables, but they are stuck if I just say the first sound. There has been great improvement in tracing. If a child did not do a good job I would not put a star on his paper, or sometimes if the paper was really bad, I would throw it away. All of this seemed to work because now everyone tries hard to do it the right way.

Group 3. Both sections of the group are doing sounds, rhyming, and blending-say it fast. They all like the blending-say it fast stories, and if someone is not working or not saying the word fast, they do not get to see the picture. Rhyming goes well for about one word, but after that they start to make a lot of mistakes.

Section A started to do the blending-spell by sound, which is the hardest part of the lesson for them. I have trouble getting them to watch my fingers for cues because they all want to stick up their fingers in the air. I have tried to spend more time on this part of the lesson, but that did not seem to work either because they did not have the attention span for such a difficult task. Billy can say the sounds individually, but when it is work time, he sucks and unbuttons his shirt constantly.

For two days this month Laura was the only child in Section A, so I let her be teacher. She sat in my chair, held the book, and worked like a beaver. I could not believe it was really Laura because she usually is the worst one in the group. Now, every day she wants to be teacher, which is difficult when the whole group is present. Laura is also the best tracer in Section A. She can really stay on the line when she wants to.

Section B remained about four lessons behind Section A. Angie has a very difficult time tracing. She scribbles all over the dotted lines. Joel barely makes a mark on his paper. He does stay on the line, but the line is so faint you can hardly see it.

CHILD MANAGEMENT

Laura refused to sit in her seat or come to the group, so she was not given juice twice one week. This did seem to help her behavior.

Joel has been opening up more and more. He is very excited about the coming of Christmas, and this may be why he is becoming more verbal. We are wondering if there will be a carry-over after Christmas.

TEACHER ABSENCE (Mrs. M.)

Mrs. H. was absent for two days the week before vacation. Since no substitute is hired when one of us is absent, it was necessary to change the routine. We spent much of the time making gifts for the mothers. I continued to teach the language lessons while the student aide worked with Mrs. H.'s groups.

If Mrs. H.'s absence had continued, I would have taught the reading lessons and the parent aide would have taught the language lessons. The student aide would then have worked with the parent aide's groups on related activities.

The two days went fairly well. The main difficulty was in the large number of children working in the same part of the room.

January Report
(first two weeks)

SEMI-STRUCTURED TIME

We began the month by introducing musical instruments. We identified each instrument using the language patterns and then gave each child an instrument. The first day they played only when we clapped--one clap or many claps in rapid succession. After this exercise we let them play the instruments the way they wanted to, just to see if they all knew how to make the instruments work. At the end of the period, each child came up to the box and said, "This is a ---." We did the same thing on the second day, and on the third day the children played while one of the teachers played "Cows in the Pasture" on the piano. Then we formed a line, and they marched and played to different songs. The children enjoy playing the instruments. Their sense of rhythm is good, and they follow the piano well. Jackie and Billy are excellent marchers and players for being just three years old.

A second activity during this time was making decorations for the bulletin boards. The children colored pictures of snowmen and of children sliding on saucers. The snowmen were most interesting because the children had to put on the eyes, nose, mouth, and buttons. The top group, as might be expected, did the best job, although everyone did quite well.

We also played some group games using a ball. The group is slow getting the idea of a game. Joel and Eliana in particular are stiff in these group activities and really do not enjoy them.

SUBJECT AREAS

I. LANGUAGE (Mrs. M.)

Group 1. Polars: In the old B-E materials polars and multiple polars were taught before opposites. In the new materials, opposites are taught before multiples. So far, we have covered

empty-full, big-little, loud-soft, tall-short, and fat-skinny. These created no problems and were covered quickly; in fact, the prescribed pace is slow for this group.

We have also been working on the prepositions in, over, on, under, and in front of. Prepositions can be confusing because the children have to be able to distinguish the object under consideration from the preposition used. As they became more familiar with these prepositions I asked where things were. Again, the prescribed pace is very slow for this group. For example, in front of is introduced very slowly, starting with pictures of the fronts of objects. In the next few weeks I will begin skipping materials.

We covered the parts of a table, sandal, wagon, egg, pot, cup, purse, and hammer, and we started the parts of umbrella, tree, and fish. I used a real umbrella which held the group's attention better than the picture. In the new B-E materials the parts of the objects are named, but the function of the part is not discussed as it was in the old B-E materials. In this respect I feel the older materials were better.

Action statements have been very easy for this group. They can always identify what something is doing or what it is capable of doing. We started working on a new task this month. A series of three pictures was presented, and the children were asked why the final action happened. For example, there were pictures of a boy standing by a puddle, the boy putting a board across the puddle, and the boy walking across the puddle on the board. After telling about each picture, I asked the group why the boy put the board across the puddle. This was a good activity because it made the children think ahead as well as recall events in a sequence.

Groups 2 and 3. Polars: Both groups worked on objects that are long and not long, and on long and short. After using the long and not long statements, it has taken the children time to become used to the opposite. They want to say not long instead of short.

We worked for two weeks on the prepositions over and on. The groups tend to confuse over with under in the vertical series of pictures in the book. They also find it difficult to discuss where something was. I felt a concrete activity would be more useful, so I had the children put their hands in over and under positions. I also had the children put objects on the felt board and then tell where they put them.

The parts covered and reviewed were those of a cup, match, pencil, hammer, hat, and purse. There were no real problems with these objects except remembering the proper name for each part. Looking at the book is also a problem in this activity, so I resorted to concrete objects where possible. I also cut out whole objects and wrote the children's names on them. When they were able to tell me the names of all the parts, I gave them the cutout. I wondered what the boys would do when presented with a purse with their name on it, but they worked just as hard as the girls for them.

The one time the children are willing to follow the book is on action statements. They usually enjoy the pictures, and I give them the chance to do what the pictures show.

In dealing with action statements, these groups are not particularly mature in their judgments. They apparently cannot understand that something in a picture may not reflect what is "natural" in the real world. For instance, when I asked, "Can a boy fly?" they answered, "Yes, a superman can fly." To this I replied, "Yes, but can most people fly?" Quite a few have said their fathers can fly. There is a picture of a boy in mid-air above a fire with the seat of his pants burning. When asked if a boy can sit on a fire, the children said yes, because in fact the boy in the picture did sit on the fire. I would say, "No, because he would get burned," but their thinking does not go that far.

II. ARITHMETIC

Group 1. (Mrs. H.) I started this group on the new Distar arithmetic books. The material has changed so much that I had a difficult time deciding where to start. I finally decided on

lesson 102 because the format for writing down the problems has changed, and I felt my group should be exposed to this. Well, the children could do it after the first day, but as I looked ahead the book showed lesson after lesson of the same thing. I object to all the repetition; my group would be too bored. Also there is so much material to cover in one lesson that it would be virtually impossible to complete the lesson before the children get very tired of it.

I started the week on lesson 116, but the children were very bored with this lesson, so I went back to the old materials. They love to do problems on the board (both addition and subtraction). After we check our problems we identify symbols 1 through 20. This is what they like to do, so I am doing it. If it is fun for them, they will work hard.

Group 3. (Mrs. M.)

The rote counting to six is coming much better. Bonnie is still behind, especially since her long absence.

We have been counting concrete objects. Many have a difficult time saying one number for one object. The felt board is used for counting; as one child puts the figures on the board the rest count. If you don't count you don't get a turn to put them on the board.

The felt board is also used for matching activities. I set up a series on the board, and the children repeat the series below. They are improving on this activity.

An activity the children found difficult was telling me what number I had counted to, because they could not listen to me count without counting themselves. When the count, they forget to listen for when I stop.

Lydia, after a year and a half of counting, still cannot count to six unaided. I work on this during home visits with her.

III. READING (Mrs. H.)

Group 1. This group continues to do a new lesson each day and to learn a new sound each week. Brenda still has problems identifying the new sounds; she gets $\bar{a}$ and $\bar{e}$ mixed up. I can hand them their workbooks now without saying a word. They do them completely and correctly by themselves. They prefer to do these first and then their take-home story sheets, which are much neater and easier for them to do. When Sandy receives her take-home sheet, she immediately starts to race through it, hoping to be the first one done. I have been after her about her sloppy pages, so maybe she will begin to slow down.

Group 2. Group 2 has a problem with attention span. Everyone looks around at everyone else or plays with his clothing. In an effort to get them to look at the reading book, I tried sitting in one of their seats and looking at the book at their level, but they still turned their heads around to see what I was saying. This is something that they should know by now, and I am tired of spending five or ten minutes telling them the rule--to look at the book. If this continues, some of them are going to miss juice and cookies.

Wilbur continues to be the best, most consistent worker, and he loves every minute of it. David is the slowest one in this group; the other children know about nine sounds, but he only knows four. Lydia does not seem to pay attention, but when called upon to do something by herself, she can do it. All the children are really good at saying the sounds fast, but they still have some problem doing them without stopping. They are also tracing [th] correctly after much practice.

We started doing workbooks, which was a total disaster. The children were completely unable to look at the box and then make that particular sound. If I showed them how to make an [m] they would proceed to make an [m] in all the boxes. We worked on workbooks for only one day because I thought I would lose my mind. I do not know when or if I will resume this exercise.

Group 3. Both sectons of this group worked together for the first week this month because there were many absentees. They work much better together now than they used to. They all concentrated on the book for the first ten minutes, and each one said the sounds individually for my benefit, so I could see where each child was. I kept a chart for all the children, and after a sound was stabilized, I checked it off. This served as a progress chart--an indication of where each child needed extra attention during home visits.

We did not do related skills that week, because I wanted to spend ten minutes tracing the sounds to see how they were doing, since Harriett, the high school aide, usually does this with them. I soon realized that they really needed a lot of work; Harriett usually tells them to trace without actually giving them any assistance. Julian has the most difficulty because all he wants to do is make lots of little lines.

During the second week the group met in two sections again, but they had switched places--the slower group had turned into the faster group. This is probably because of the absences in what had been the faster group and also because Gordy and Joel have started to respond to the sound sheets, with the result that this group now moves faster. We spent most of the time doing sounds, reading sounds, blending-say it fast, and take-home sheets. I stopped doing blending-spell by sound altogether because they simply cannot do it. All they say is the whole word, not each sound individually. I just do not think a three-year-old can hear sounds separately. Perhaps we will resume this exercise a little later.

CHILD MANAGEMENT (Mrs. M.)

Language group 2 has been working poorly. David was terribly silly one day, so I put him out of the room. His behavior improved the next day. I also put Robbin out one period because he told me no when I told him to turn around. He was shocked when I picked him up and put him out in the other room. I find myself terribly frustrated with this group. I do everything but stand on my head to get them going.

Laura is the most improved child since vacation. Since the day I let her be teacher, she really works hard if she thinks there will be time for her to be teacher again. She acts much better in the total school setting.

Joel also has made good progress. When he is not pressed, he will work with the group.

Billy's behavior is better, although his attention still wanders easily. Bonnie is back after three weeks out for her eye operation. She is quite verbal, which I did not expect after the long absence.

January Report
(second two weeks)-

SEMI-STRUCTURED TIME

We did not have school Monday, because the busses would not start. We had planned to introduce animals, their young, and their sounds on Tuesday, but due to the many absences we did not want to start something new. So on Tuesday, since we had only twelve children, we taught them London Bridge, and they sang the song to themselves the rest of the morning. Wednesday, the A-V people came to film us, so we decided to have the children play their instruments and march around the room. There was no school again on Thursday because of the busses. On Friday the teachers made felt shapes (circles, squares, and triangles), identified these individually, and asked each child to choose a particular shape by coming up and taking a shape off the felt board. They really enjoyed this activity.

We were finally able to spend the next week talking about animals. One day we identified the names of the animals from large pictures. We also talked about the noises they made and whether they were wild or farm animals. Another day we used felt outlines of animals, and the children identified them by name and sound. No matter what animal we put on the felt board, Julian assured us he had it at his house. My favorite is his horse named Amos. On several other days we identified by name the mothers and babies. The babies are very dear to the children, and they use a special tone of voice in speaking about them.

SUBJECT AREAS

I. LANGUAGE (Mrs. M.)

Group 1. We reviewed body parts, as well as the parts of a tree, fish, umbrella, and shovel, and began the parts of a nail, shoe, and turtle. I object to the book's use of the term "top" in discussing the upper part of the shoe because actually the upper part is the top and sides of the shoe.

The category we worked on was tools--can you work with it? There are so many tools that the four girls have never heard of that I feel we should go slowly. They know the rule, and they know the objects are tools, but they do not know the names of the tools. What we really need is a junior tool kit so they could see and feel each tool.

The main prepositions covered were in front of and in back of. I really object to the line drawings in the B-E book because they do not use perspective and therefore it is very difficult to tell the difference between the pictures of in front of, in back of, and next to. This is especially true when the objects are pictured in profile.

Groups 2 and 3. We continued working with the prepositions over, on, in, and under. They had some trouble with the pictures for under, again because it is difficult from the line drawings to tell if the object is actually underneath something else. I am still using the felt board and real objects to work on prepositions because the children's attention wanders so quickly from the book. They need something more concrete than line drawings.

Both groups started the category of vehicles again after an unsuccessful attempt earlier in the year. There is something to be said for starting categories a little later in the year because the children are picking up the rule and statement much more quickly this time. I am using toy vehicles to discuss the category.

With the action stories I have been letting the children make up a story to go with the pictures. To reinforce the action statement, I let them talk about the objects in the book using the identity statement or the "not" statement. This has worked quite well.

Both groups worked on the parts of a pencil, hammer, hat, cup, and purse. They work best when I give them a cutout of the object after they tell me all the parts correctly or when I allow the best worker to wear an old hat I brought in.

Empty and full were the only polars covered. There were no problems because this was a review lesson.

II. ARITHMETIC

Group 1. (Mrs. H.) We continued to rote count from one to thirty, trying to go further each day, and each child would do a count-forwards and a count-backwards problem. Together we did 1 + 1 = , 2 + 2 = , through 6 + 6 = .

I made an addition worksheet to give the children which they did at their seats instead of going to the board. Sandy and Carol were able to complete their pages, but I had to help Eliana on every problem. She knows the steps for finding the answer, but in the process of counting out the lines she forgets what number comes next. On my next home visit I hope to show her mother how she can help Eliana with these addition problems. Brenda has really come to life. She seems to enjoy working by herself and wants to finish her work. I bought stars to put on the children's papers. After I check their problems, they choose any two stars and put them on their papers.

At the end of the month, I changed the format for this group. One day we do either an addition or subtraction worksheet, which the children really seem to enjoy. (Eventually I will put both kinds of problems on one worksheet.) The next day we do counting, identifying numerals, and story problems. This system seems to work out much better because the children and I do not feel so rushed.

Group 3. (Mrs. M.) We are still rote counting to seven. After one and a half years of drill in counting to seven, Lydia still cannot do it, and I am at a loss to know what to do to help her. We must just continue trying at school and during home visits, I guess.

Lately we have been counting to various numbers between one and seven. At first, if I said to count to three, the children still counted to seven. They listen better how, however, and more are stopping with the proper number.

Matching is getting better. Nearly all the children can match a series of four objects. They all enjoy this exercise, and Lydia, I might add, is an especially good matcher.

II. READING (Mrs. H.)

Group 1. Group 1 learned the sounds [I], [K], and [$\bar{O}$]. I have started to skip some of the lessons because after the book introduces a new sound, three or four lessons follow which review the same sound. I do not feel this group needs all this review, so we have been moving at a faster pace.

Instead of hurrying through the reading sounds so there is enough time left for stories and workbooks, I decided to do one story on one day and two workbook pages the next. The children seem to like this schedule better. On the old schedule Sandy and Carol were always finished with their stories and doing their workbooks before Brenda and Eliana were even halfway through the story.

Brenda has been the most improved child during the last few weeks. She wants her papers to look nice, and she wants them to be correct. She laughs and giggles all the time and really seems to enjoy the reading group. Eliana knows the sounds as well as anyone, but she likes to daydream. I am always having to tell her to work. Carol does not seem to be working as hard on her take home stories as she used to. I warned her that she was not going to get her workbook if she didn't stay on the line.

Group 2. Problems seem to arise the minute this group walks into the room. First, we fight over which seat we are going to sit in and who will be sitting next to me. Finally, we get down to the nitty-gritty for the day, and the children act as if they were drugged. If I say it once I say it twenty times, "Look at the book--look at the book!"

The children do a bad job on the symbol identification, but when it comes to the reading words, they just do everything but read. Wilbur is the only one who consistently looks at the book. The children say the sounds, but it is clear to me that they do not know what they are reading. I really work hard on getting them to go from one sound to another without stopping. I do it many times for them, but some continue to stop after every sound. They cannot wait to finish the reading sounds so they can have a story, which they really love.

We started to do work booklets, which they seem to like. I gave out stars to the children who stayed on the line. David does an excellent job of tracing even though he does not know all the sounds. Robbin was the only child in the group one day, so I worked with him individually on his workbook page. As soon as he saw me get his workbook, he said, "I can't do that." He is anxious to take his workbook home, but I have explained to him he cannot do this until he finishes all the pages, which will probably be an impossibility for him.

Group 3. Angie, Laura, Bonnie, and Julian now make up the slowest section of Group 3. We spend about two days on each lesson. They have no trouble looking at the sound pages, but when they have to do the reading sounds, they start looking around the room. I have a hard time getting them to say the sounds without stopping, but I hope this will come with practice. Billy, Joel, Gordy, and Jackie make up the faster section. They scream out the sounds at one another. Both sections seem to like the stories.

CHILD MANAGEMENT

Reading group 2 has been having real problems settling down to work. One day I held some chalk in my hand and explained to them if I saw someone not working, I would write his name on the board and that meant no juice. I threatened a lot, but I did not want to do it on the first day. I have tried to give them some physical reward like a tickle or tap on the head. This works once but then it is old. I may go back to candy for awhile.

EQUIPMENT PROBLEMS

We did not have school for two days one week this month because the temperature was below zero and the busses would not start. When the busses do start, however, they do not have any heat. Heaters on the busses should have been checked early in the year and additional heaters installed. As it is now, it would be spring

before we could get them. At the moment we are using blankets. While they are of some help, it is difficult to keep them on the children. The children arrive at school so cold they are nearly in tears. On the whole, the children are not dressed warmly enough for winter weather and seldom wear mittens.

February Report

SEMI-STRUCTURED TIME

For two days we studied baby farm animals. After identifying each flannel picture, we put the mothers along the top of the flannel board and the babies along the bottom. We pointed to a mother and said, "Find her baby." The child held up both animals, and the group yelled "Yes" or "No" if the pair was correct or not. We dismissed each child to the bathroom by having him name the baby animal we pointed to.

One day early in the month we introduced the game, "Drop the Hanky." The children did not seem to notice when the hanky was dropped behind them, so we had to tell them each time. They really laughed when we teachers joined the game.

Later in the month we spent this time all week playing group games--Simon Says, London Bridge, Hokey-Pokey, and Musical Chairs. The favorite seemed to be Hokey-Pokey, and the children did very well coordinating their motions with their singing. We expected all the children to participate in each activity.

In order to reinforce the category vehicles, which all the groups had talked about in language, we spent one Friday cutting out vehicles from magazines. Joel found pictures, but for some reason he did not want to cut them out of the magazine. We made folders for each child to leave his pictures in over the weekend. Monday, the children pasted their vehicle pictures onto large pieces of construction paper. Tuesday and Wednesday they cut out pictures of foods and pasted them all onto one long sheet of white paper. The children enjoyed this activity and were very pleased with the resulting "mural." All the children were able to go through the magazines and find pictures of vehicles and foods. A few, however, pasted on the wrong side of the pictures.

A week before Valentine's Day the children colored and cut out red hearts, which we put up on the bulletin board and used for dismissal. The day before Valentine's Day the children made

valentines for their parents. They pasted red hearts on white doilies, and then traced their names over the dotted lines we had printed for them. The Valentine's Day party was the high point of the week for the children. They were not really aware of the holiday itself, only of the fact that we were having a party.

SUBJECT AREAS

I. LANGUAGE (Mrs. M.)

Group 1. I have been moving this group at a fairly rapid pace. Pronouns were introduced at the beginning of the month. We worked on he and she, and since these are fairly common pronouns, the children had no problems. I have them use pronouns whenever possible in other parts of the lesson, such as in their retelling of the action and concept stories. This is a favorite activity in which I read the story, ask questions, and have the girls retell it to me.

We began working on verb tenses--was and were. These were illustrated with a series of three pictures--an ice cube, a partially melted ice cube, and a pool of water. The children saw this as a story to tell.

We also started verbs of the senses--to look, to taste, to smell. The B-E book shows a picture of something and gives two ways of describing it. For example, a picture of a pair of old shoes bears the captions "These shoes are old" and "These shoes look old." The children saw no reason for both statements and became very confused. The whole exercise seems rather senseless to me.

We continued to work on specific parts of the body--the torso, shoulders, waist, abdomen, back, and chest--but this seems a little too advanced for four-year-olds. The girls also had trouble with the parts of a pair of glasses. The terms, lenses, frames, and earpieces lack meaning because none of the girls wears glasses. I did bring in several pairs of glasses, and this helped some.

The girls caught me on categories one day. "Is an iron a container?" I asked. "Yes," they answered. "Can you put something in it?" Yes, water." One thing is sure--the B-E book is not always right!

One week, we started the lesson each day by reciting the days of the week. Two of the girls can say them by themselves; the other two still need help. Not one of them, however, is very good at answering, "If today is Tuesday, tomorrow is _____," but they all know "The Brady Bunch" is on TV Friday!

Multiple polars were reintroduced. The B-E book uses two objects instead of three, so we should be able to go through these quite quickly.

Brenda was out of school for two full weeks. She was exposed to scarletina, and her mother kept her out to protect the other children. I was afraid this would put Brenda behind in her work, which is a general problem with the B-E program--any long absence puts the child far behind. When Brenda came back, however, she did not seem to have lost much ground. I did make a home visit that week and went over the activities she had missed.

I noticed a lack of left-to-right ordering in Sandy on a home visit as she was reading sounds and pointing out objects. Also, one day in school she wrote her name in reverse. This may be a phase common in five-year-olds, or it may be due to left-handedness.

Carol is getting quite good at picking out words. What a delight to have her point out words in my books and in those I read to her during play period. She is also good at remembering what happened in a story long after she has heard it.

Groups 2 and 3. During the first week of the month we worked mainly on categories. For the foods category, I put up the Peabody pictures of food on the bulletin board. The children enjoy these pictures much more than those in the book. They also enjoy talking about the objects I have in boxes. Robbin has a favorite car he always wants to hold. One day, he tried to pocket it on the way out

of the group session. When I finally took the car away from him he was very upset with me, because he is used to always having his own way. If looks could kill, I would have been a goner!

I still have better luck using real objects for parts, so I take the lesson from the book and use an object with it.

During the second two weeks of the month, the main emphasis was on colors. During the first week on colors, Group 3 worked only on red and not red objects, which posed no problem. We played a fishing game with a pole, a magnet, and fish made from red and "not red" construction paper. Harriett also used this game in her group. After a week on red, Group 3 moved on to yellow briefly and then back to red. They can work only with one color at a time. When I ask if a particular child has something red on, personal pride requires a yes answer whether he does or not. In choosing red objects, desire also takes over. For example, when I told Julian to take a red object out of the box, he saw a silver car he wanted very badly and took it out of the box. When I asked if it was red he answered no, but he could not find any red object that he liked as much as the silver car.

In Group 2, when we began working on colors, four of the six children already knew all the colors. Wilbur had never worked on colors before, and he is having a hard time learning concepts like red and not red. David has had the colors before, but he never learned them. He cannot seem to concentrate on looking at and saying the colors, and I am sure as far as he is concerned there is no real need for him to learn them. He does not use colors in his normal speech and does not care enough about the objects I present to learn their colors. I think I will try using candies of different colors to see if this increases his desire to learn. The other four children in the group have a hard time because they always want to yell out the colors when it is David's or Wilbur's turn.

We have also worked on "next to." The children understand that in a row of three objects, the objects are next to each other. The B-E materials also show a row of three objects with a single

object above and below the row-- o o o o o . To the children, the single object outside the row is next to the one above or below it. This seems correct to me; the B-E materials could be much clearer here.

II. ARITHMETIC

Group 1. (Mrs. H.) We counted to seventy-five this month. We also counted backwards and forwards from certain numbers, and by twos and fives.

The girls have been doing work sheets with both addition and subtraction problems on the same sheet. Sandy and Carol zip right through the sheets, although Sandy does watch the signs better than Carol. Eliana needs to be pushed or she spends fifteen minutes on one problem.

We have been identifying numerals through 20. I made a big cardboard thermometer, and every day each child gets to move the indicator to the number I specify--an exercise they all enjoy. The children also enjoy identifying the numerals on coins.

Group 3. (Mrs. M.) Five of the eight children in this group are able to count to nine now without any help. Billy always misses three and six; Bonnie has been out of school almost constantly since December, so she is well behind the rest of the group; and Joel is reluctant to count at all. Gordy asked me one day why I always clap when they count. I told him it was to keep everyone counting together, and I told him we would stamp our feet for a change. That brought a big smile!

We are still working on identifying the numeral 6. It is difficult to believe that this group has learned to identify twelve sounds by name but still cannot identify the numeral 6. It is enough to turn my hair gray.

With the exception of Billy, Bonnie, and Joel, all the children can count objects and count out a given number of objects. We have been counting little tools from a tool box and various objects from a purse. I am sure part of Billy, Bonnie, and Joel's problem is that children this age use numbers and counting very little at home.

III. READING (Mrs. H.)

Group 1. These girls do not seem to want to slow down for anything. Stories on one day and workbooks the next seems to work out well. They like the stories, but I think they are tired of tracing the words and sounds. The stories are also getting longer, and the children seem to get tired of them before we finish. They love doing the workbooks and do not really need much direction from me at all. I honestly think they would do their workbooks for longer periods of time if time were available.

I think Carol has the best carry-over in reading; she is able to recognize words and sounds in the story books we read to the children at story time. In reading she knows many of the words by sight, so she yells them out and the other children watch her for clues. We found a pre-primer for her to read during play time, and she really enjoys the extra attention as she reads to one of us at the beginning of each day. I hope her kindergarten teacher will continue to do this with her next year so she will not stop developing her reading ability and lose the start she has gained.

Sandy and Brenda are starting to remember some words without sounding them out, but Eliana does not seem to remember any of the words. Eliana also cannot seem to remember what she reads. She likes to cross out the wrong picture, but she cannot remember the first word after she says the fourth one; and she still wants me to watch over her while she does her workbook.

Group 2. Group 2 had one bright day when all six children were present, and they all worked hard. I found that if I teased them as we went through the lessons, they worked much better. For example, on the sound pages when there was an animal, we

nicknamed him "Goofy." The children identified all the sounds quickly so they could yell out "Goofy" when an animal came along --they laughed all the time. I started calling Robbin "Goofy" because he was not looking at the book; the other children started working harder so they would not be called "Goofy." I could not believe how much we accomplished that day.

This group started to read stories this month, which they seem to enjoy. The tracing is not too hard for them, but when they have to make the sound themselves they say, "I can't do it." When they finish their workbook page, they put a star on their booklet, but they all know that if they scribble, no star.

The whole group is having difficulty with the last sound, which they want to drop altogether. Sometimes I think it would help if B-E could use words that would have some meaning for the children. They seem to read better when I say, "O.K., you know this word." When the word is "mad," we always look mad at each other, and then they laugh.

Group 2 had another good day when Robbin and David were absent because we could concentrate on our work, and I did not have to watch them all the time to see if they were working. Wilbur is the only one in the group who consistently works day after day. He is always the one who listens and responds first. If only the other five would follow in his footsteps.

I am trying to show David where he should start tracing on the top line. He gives up very easily if I keep watching him. Russell never seems to get finished. He just plays around with his pencil and listens to what other people are saying. Lydia rarely needs any instruction on how to do her take-home.

Group 3. This group can do about three new lessons a week now. They are, however, starting to forget some of their beginning sounds, although they seem to remember the new ones. The slower section does a better job at reading sounds than the faster section because they watch the book more closely.

All the children have become good tracers, but there are too many words for them to read in each lesson, and they are very tired by the time they get to the last page. Their attention span only lasts for about two pages.

Julian and Angie were the only ones present in their section one week, and they did the reading sounds as well as the top group! Angie yelled the word out as soon as she finished saying the last sound. When I spent a second day on the same lesson, I let them take turns being the teacher; this probably motivated them more than anything else.

Jackie, Billy, Gordy, and Joel did four lessons one week. Gordy had trouble saying "n" ; he would say "m" instead. I kept telling him to show his teeth, and by the end of the week he was starting to do it. Jackie always wants to get off her chair so she can give me the related skills book; Billy always finds something to keep his hands occupied; and Joel keeps looking at the book as long as I say something funny to him. It is a fun group to work with because Jackie is always saying something funny.

CHILD MANAGEMENT

Julian has been out in left field lately. He pays no attention, and he distracts the other children; yet, when it is his turn, he can usually come up with the right answer. I put him out of the room one day, but that was a mistake, because it did not make any difference the next day.

SUMMARY FOR THE YEAR

LANGUAGE (Mrs. M.)

Group 3. Of all the groups, the progress of this group is most obvious. They have completed nearly half of the Distar Language I program.

All the children are able to use the whole sentence pattern. To hear the children talking with one another in whole sentences makes all the repetition worthwhile.

Polars are also carrying over into their everyday speech patterns. They seem to refer to the positive quality of an object more often than to the negative quality (e.g., "that is little" rather than "that is not big"). We have covered numerous object parts and categories. Once the parts or categories have been introduced and repeated the group usually does fairly well on them.

Propositions went well until we hit "between." In a series of pictures the children say all the objects are "between," including the end objects. We are still working on this.

By the end of the year the group will know three colors without hesitation: red, yellow, and blue.

There have also been behavioral changes. Joel and Bonnie have opened up and are now working well with the group. Laura has settled down considerably but still has her good days and her bad days.

Group 2. Academically this group is on the same level as Group 3; their progress has been much slower than I expected. They constantly have to be reminded to keep at a task. They also pick on one another, fall off chairs, and generally are distracted and hard to work with.

David is by far the slowest child in the group. He is the main disruptive agent and generally impedes the group's progress.

Russell and Teresa will probably hold their own in kindergarten. Once away from the rest of the group they will probably function better.

Wilbur, a three-year-old, is the star of the group. Even he has felt the distraction of the group, however, and gets terribly silly at times.

Group 1. This group of four-year-old girls has nearly finished the Distar Language I program. There are few if any language areas in which they do not function at a high level. They have covered all concepts with ease.

In addition to the Distar materials, they have also learned the days of the week and months of the year and have started to work on telling time.

Socially this is a fairly mature group. They get along well and can work hard and independently. They also work well during free times with the rest of the class, often assuming leadership roles.

READING (Mrs. H.)

It does not seem possible that the year is coming to a close. It took a good two months to get the children accustomed to the reading lessons, except for Group 1, which seemed to remember a lot from last year.

Group 1. This group was the most fun to work with. They were alert, quick to learn the new sounds, and have finished all the reading lessons. I am really proud of their achievement. Their favorite part of the lesson was doing the workbook; they would have done page after page each day, but I rotated stories and worksheets with the workbooks.

Carol has been my best student. At four years of age, she is able to read. She can pick up a children's book, and if she does not recognize a word can sound it out all by herself. Reading is really fun for her. I hope she keeps reading through kindergarten so that she does not forget how by the time she reaches first grade.

Group 2. This group started the year off well, but midway through the year they seemed to regress, so that Group 3 has almost caught up with them. According to the reading materials, if one child has difficulty identifying the sounds, the teacher is to stop and back up about five lessons. It seemed as if I was always going backwards for the same two children. It is the end of the year, and I am still saying, "Look at the book." This group surpassed the other groups when it came to picking their noses, playing with their clothing, and teasing others.

Lydia and David do the best work on their take-homes, even though David does not know what sound he is tracing. For Wilbur, a three-year-old, the take-homes were very hard. It was not until February that he stopped saying, "I can't do it." He prefers sitting at the table to do his worksheet instead of sitting on the floor and writing on the seat of his chair. I would strongly recommend that tables or individual desks be used for the written work. Lack of space was our problem, however.

Group two completed only eighty lessons, which is not very many, since all the children, except one, had had reading last year. We were never able to do the workbooks; they were simply too hard.

Group 3. Group 3 was a real challenge. For about half the year I split the group into two sections according to ability, but then I found I could not cover the lesson adequately in the half period allotted for each section. When I merged the two sections again, it really kept me jumping to keep order and at the same time keep the lesson moving at the fast pace. The children loved to talk about anything, and one conversation always led into another. I hated to stop this, but if I didn't, nothing would have been accomplished. As it was, they completed sixty lessons. Generally speaking, their tracing was pretty good for three-year-olds, although many times they forgot to start on the big dot.

During the year, I thought of some changes in the reading program that ought to occur. The take-home sheets should be longer because the sounds to trace were much too small for a three-year-old's coordination. I would also like to see fewer words in the stories because the children lose their places when they read; the words seem to be crowded on the pages. Also, and very importantly, the children like to read words that are familiar to them.

ARITHMETIC

Group 1. (Mrs. H.) The girls can count to 100 now. They also do addition and subtraction problems using numbers up to 20. Carol and Sandy have no difficulty, but I still have to help Brenda and Eliana. Brenda knows how to find the answers, but she forgets how to write the numbers. Eliana likes to watch others, and she forgets how many lines she has to make to complete the problem. Her mother has been working with her, which, I am sure, will be a help.

Group 3. (Mrs. M.) Everyone but Bonnie and Joel are able to count to 10. They can also identify the symbols 4 and 6. We have done a lot of work with counting and matching objects. The children have improved on this but still have difficulty. Arithmetic is by far the most difficult activity for three-year-olds.

TEACHER TRAINING

One week in February we had with us Mrs. Birdsong, who was learning to use the language training curriculum so she could teach it in the Dallas, Texas, school system. Because Mrs. Birdsong was already familiar with the theory and materials of the program, it was not necessary to go over the whys and wherefores. Instead, we went over the specific lessons and materials she was to use and answered questions about them. Most of her questions were about personal methods of reinforcement and changes in presentation.

On Monday, Mrs. Birdsong observed the total program. She sat with the children during playtime, semi-structured time, and story time, which gave her a chance to get used to the children, and gave them a chance to get acquainted with her. For the next three days she worked with the children, at first with one group and then with all three, using the lesson plans we had prepared. She seemed at ease and had a good relationship with the children. As a matter of fact, Laura became quite attached to her. Her main difficulty lay in not keeping the group going at a rapid enough pace. From time to time she would lose children as a result of the slow pace. Pacing, we have found, is something a teacher learns only after practice.

By the end of the week, Mrs. Birdsong was sold on the program. Her own enthusiasm will certainly help to make the program a success in Dallas.

EXAMPLES OF POSITIVE REINFORCEMENT

One of the most popular rewards in the eyes of the children is getting to leave the group first when they have worked hard. Upon leaving the group, they line up for their next lesson, and the first one gets to knock at the door.

The children also like to play teacher. They really have their hands full holding the book and getting their fellow workers to respond. It is really enjoyable to watch them be the teacher because much of what they do is a caricature of what they see us do. Another reward during the lessons is being given the responsibility of passing out pencils to others in the group.

Physical rewards, such as a touch, a tickle, or "give me five" (fingers), often works very effectively and accomplishes a great deal.

Sometimes, at the end of a day's lesson, we put stars or seasonal stickers on the children's take-home sheets. They choose the one they want, and they always want to lick it themselves. There is a great deal of verbal reinforcement written into the program--a child is always praised for a correct response so that he knows immediately that his answer is correct.

Sometimes, we reinforce the total group by drawing something on the board; a silly picture especially delights them. The children also enjoy erasing, which they get to do when they have worked hard.

At the beginning of the year the children were given candy, which worked especially well with the three-year-olds. Later in the year the candy was replaced with less fattening things like take-home sheets, which the children could color and display to their families. Surprisingly enough, this worked as well as the candy. We also made cutouts of parts of objects; when a child was able to name all the parts, he could take the cutout home.

Stories also serve as a reinforcement. If the group works hard, they sometimes are rewarded with a story from the "Action and Concept" book. The children are never better than at this time.

Sometimes as a reward we play a game at the end of the class. Determining the order of dismissal by how hard each child has worked, the teacher calls the children up to her and whispers a way of going to the door: hopping, jumping, taking little steps.

ISSUES CONCERNING CHILDREN AND TEACHERS IN THE LANGUAGE TRAINING PROGRAM

CHILDREN

Do we ever play? At the beginning of each day, we have fifteen minutes of free play in which the children play with puzzles, blocks, books, telephones, lacing beads, and flannel board pictures. About midyear, we noticed that three or four children were doing new things with many of these toys. The latest game is tag, but we really do not have the room to continue this game for any length of time.

A different type of play sometimes occurs in the reading and language groups. In language, for example, we have done a type of structured play with different colored objects to help the children learn the colors. In reading, on the sound pages a rabbit often appears whom the children have named Goofy. If someone is not working, the children like to call that person Goofy too. They almost make it a game to see whom they can call Goofy for that day.

We also play group games, sometimes during semi-structured time--Drop the Hanky, Musical Chairs, Simon Says, London Bridge.

Do we give opportunity for individual differences? As teachers, we best meet the individual needs of the children during home visits, where we spend time either helping the child catch up or helping him do things too advanced for the entire class. A good example is Carol, whose reading ability is very advanced. She knows more words by sight that the others in her group, so on her home visit she reads from a pre-primer. She likes this so much that she prefers to read to one of us during playtime rather than play.

The children are grouped by ability at the beginning of the year, but these groups are flexible, so a child can be changed into another group whenever he is ready.

How do we discipline the children? In the original Bereiter and Englemann book, Teaching Disadvantaged Children in the Preschool (1968), it was stated that children were to be put in dimly-lit closets when they were having a problem. We never have and never would do this. This procedure has been eliminated, we were glad to learn, in the new B-E materials.

In our classroom, when a child is not working with the group, we try everything we can think of to get him involved in the activity. We never send a child out of the room unless he is bothering or distracting the others. If he still continues to cause problems in the group, he might miss juice and cookies. Whenever one child misses juice and cookies, everyone seems to take notice, and it is a long time before it happens again. When a child is separated from his group, or misses juice and cookies, one of us usually talks to him about what he has done.

All in all, we have had very few discipline problems, and we have yet to see a temper tantrum.

Do the children exhibit emotional strain? From reading about this program, one might expect to see the children sitting on their chairs like frightened parrots or sitting in a darkened room because they have misbehaved. Seeing the program in action, however, one finds happy, busy children enjoying what they are doing. We do not push them beyond their limits, and it is rare to see a child crying, unless he has been hurt by another child.

The children take great pride in being able to do a task; its successful completion serves as a reward. The children are glad when they see that they can do something, and they are pleased to take home something they have made.

The daily routine helps the children organize themselves and feel secure. The whole group is quick to notice any change in the schedule.

We have not, in three years of the program, had a child drop out because he did not like coming to school.

Why is juice time quiet? Because the program is so verbally demanding for the children, we feel a quiet time is necessary; by the middle of the morning, the children need a chance to rest and catch their breaths before going on to the next activity. When we turn the lights out, the children are immediately quiet; they may whisper if they must, but most are content just to sit and have their juice and cookies. The turning back on of the lights signals the end of quiet time and the resumption of the day's activities.

Do we use real objects? Since our school is located out in the country, people often ask whether we incorporate our peaceful, rural setting into our classroom studies. Mostly, we do not, although the children do play outside when the weather is nice.

In the discussion of plants and animals, rather than taking field trips to nearby farms and fields, we tend to rely on pictures in order to conserve time, which is essential in the B-E program. Pictures, however, often fail to provide an adequate concept of size and weight, so whenever possible, we use real objects, especially in the language lessons. Here, concrete objects provide a much needed break from the line drawings in the B-E materials. Real objects also hold the children's attention, and the children enjoy holding and feeling them.

How are the teachers trained? Both of us were trained by the teachers who taught in the program before us and by our supervisor, Donna McClelland. The subject matter of the program is very easy to follow and learn because all the patterns are clearly stated in the Distar materials.

The most important elements of the program, however, cannot be learned or taught but must come from within the teacher; her enthusiasm makes or breaks this program. She cannot expect a three-year-old child to be excited about learning the sound "mmm," for example, unless she, the teacher, is able to generate that enthusiasm.

She must also have a sense of humor and a belief in the value of children. Three- and four-year-olds can be trying, but they can also be most delightful. Like all human beings, they want to be liked and appreciated.

How are the aides trained and what do they do? We have two aides, Mrs. Weathers and Harriett, who work with us in the classroom at all times.

Mrs. Weathers, a woman from the community, was trained, as we were, to follow the language, reading, and arithmetic patterns given in the Distar materials. She works mainly with small groups to reinforce and supplement language and reading concepts. All three of us go over these materials together, so that we all understand what each of us is trying to get across to the children.

Mrs. Weathers also teaches arithmetic group 2, using the regular Distar materials. She works, as we do, at her own pace and keeps us informed of the progress of each child.

Each year we have a high school aide from the high school special education class. She receives a salary and is trained in the Distar materials. Harriett, our high school aide this year, assists Mrs. Weathers on the bus (Mrs. Weathers doubles as a bus driver), is in charge of juice time, and works with small groups on supplementary activities. The activities she does are quite simple and clearly stated. However, she often does the activity herself instead of helping the children to do it.

Is there an opportunity for teachers in this program to be creative? There is probably less chance to be creative in this program than in the unit-based and cognitive programs. To be effective in this program, however, a teacher must constantly be thinking of ways to keep the children interested. This requires a good deal of imagination. The teacher must also generate activities for semi-structured time and prepare bulletin boards which coincide with the language material. This may sound very limited, but as teachers, we do not feel cheated or stifled. A very "creative" person, however, would probably want to choose another program.

A CONTRIBUTION FROM THE TEACHERS' AIDE, MRS. WEATHERS

At the beginning of the school year, I acquaint myself with all of the parents in our program. I let them know what time each day I will be by on the bus to pick their children up. Then I give them my phone number where they may reach me in case something comes up and a child cannot attend school. The mothers and I become real friendly with each other. Most of them bring their children to the bus door and will want to chat with me about something funny a child said that happened in school or on the bus the day before. I enjoy my job very much. The children are very interesting.

It takes about forty-five minutes to pick the children up and have them at school on time each day.

THE WAY I TEACH "PARTS OF AN APPLE"

The children and I sit together in a small group at a table. I pass out papers with each child's name on it, with a picture of the object we will be talking about that day. If possible, I prefer using the real object for demonstration. Then I proceed in this manner. First, I point to and name the object like this:

Me: This is an apple. Let's all say it.
Children: This is an apple.

I praise them and say, "very good! " Then I identify the parts of an apple in this manner: "The outside of an apple has a stem, skin, and leaves." I have them repeat what I said. Then I cut the apple in two and point to the seeds, the core, and the fruit itself, naming each part in the same manner as above. Then I ask the children questions like this:

Me: What do we do with apples?
Children: We eat them.
Me: Where do apples grow?
Children: On trees.

This particular lesson may be taught or gone over three days in a week. Then I ask the children an absurd question like, "Do we bounce apples?" and the children will immediately say, "No." Then somehow you know that the children understand the relationship of the parts of an apple to the whole.

Next, the children are allowed to color the object. I prefer that they color the object its actual color. I say, "Let's color the skin of the apple red, the leaves green." After they color, I read them a story from the Distar language book.

Each day the children's work sheets are put into separate booklets, and on Friday they take their booklets home to show their parents.

NOTE: APPENDIX A: SAMPLE LESSONS, I. Group 2 with the Teachers' Aide
II. Reading, Group 2
III. Language, Group 2
APPENDIX B: READING SUPPLEMENT

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